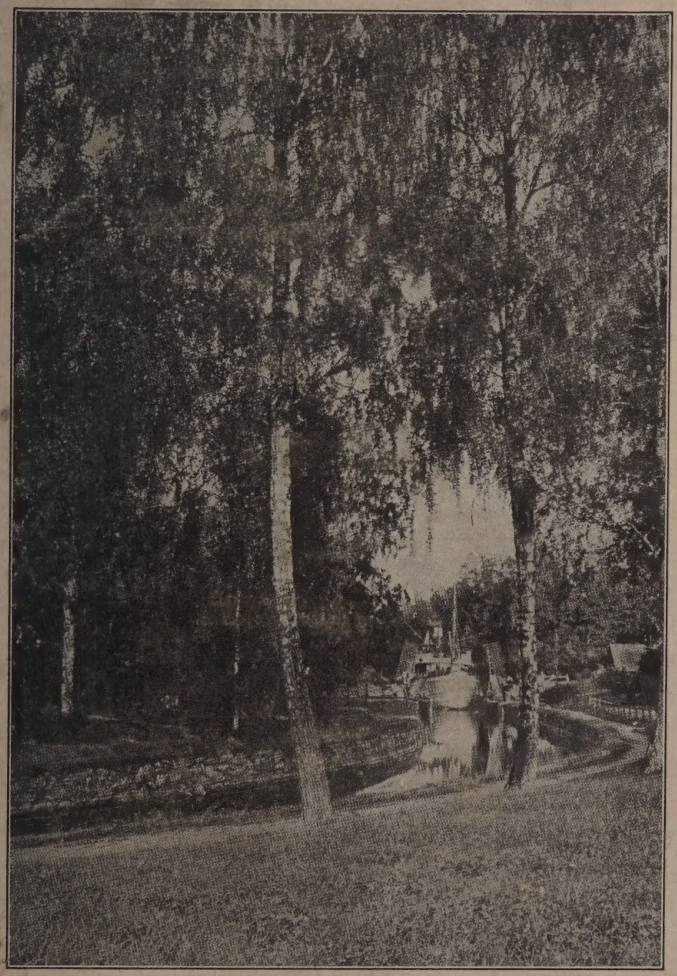
A WAYFARER IN SWEDEN



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A WAYFARER IN SWEDEN

VIEW ON THE GOTHA CANAL:
THE CANAL AT ITS NARROWEST

A WAYFARER IN SWEDEN

BY

FREDERIC WHYTE

WITH 17 ILLUSTRATIONS AND A MAP

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
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WITH MUCH LOVE

TO

MORMOR

PREFACE

IT is easy enough to decide when and how to visit most countries—France, for instance, or Italy, or Egypt, or India—but there are a good many pros and cons to be balanced against each other in the case of Sweden. Sweden enjoys during the summer months a good deal more sunshine than does England, and if you are a swimmer or a yachtsman, its sea-side holiday resorts have much to tempt you at any time during June, July and August; especially its west-coast bathing-places, Strömstad, Lysekil, Marstrand (all three north of Gothenburg); Båstad or Mölle, south of Gothenburg; or farther south still, "Sweden's Land's End", as it may be called, Falsterbo. Falsterbo possesses one of the best golf-courses in Scandinavia (perhaps those at Stockholm and Råsunda are even better), and it has a very large, excellently-managed hotel—with accommodation for more than 250 visitors—in which you can stay for about five-and-a-half or six guineas a week. I say something more about it in Chapter II and also about Båstad, which has a famous hotel too, but one of a different kind. For yachtsmen, Marstrand and Lysekil have more to offer than either Falsterbo or Båstad. To the English visitor, also, these northern places are

more of a new sensation. Falsterbo has a touch of Westward-Ho! about it; Båstad, seen from a distance, if not in its actual character, has a faintly Mediterranean aspect; but the barren-looking island of Marstrand and the still more barren surroundings of Lysekil are like nothing to be seen anywhere else in Europe. They look, indeed, like survivals from the prehistoric world. With their wonderfully health-giving sea-breezes, however, and with all the variety offered by their bays and fjords, they have much to fascinate yachtsmen and fishermen tired of waters more accessible and familiar.[1] But the hotel accommodation at Marstrand and Lysekil is limited, so perhaps the English yachtsman who likes his comfort will prefer the sailing on the waters round Stockholm—on Lake Mälar, that is, and out at Saltsjöbaden, Sweden's most famous pleasure-resort, and in among the skerries between Saltsjöbaden and the Baltic. Yes, on the whole, the Stockholm district may be declared to take precedence over all others.

Stockholm is in some ways at its most beautiful during the summer, and Sweden's "trump card", so to speak, from the standpoint of summer attractions, is the leisurely trip by steamer from Gothenburg to Stockholm by the famous Gotha Canal. Unfortunately, the Swedish capital is "empty" all the summer in the sense in which we call London "empty" in August. All its

[1] For the salmon-fisher, by the way, there is excellent sport to be had at Falkenberg, also on this western coast, about half-way between Gothenburg and Båstad.

most interesting inhabitants are away in the country or at the sea-side, its theatres and the Opera House are closed, there is a dead-and-alive look about its streets. If these drawbacks do not matter to you, well and good. Stockholm, even when empty, has much to recommend it over and above its beauty. Its best restaurants will bear comparison with any in Europe, and it is very pleasant to take your meals out of doors. Within a few hours by train or by motor-car, by steamer or by sailing-boat, you have an endless choice of delightful excursions; Saltsjöbaden, for instance, already mentioned, only a few miles away, between the city and the Baltic, is one of the most fascinating holiday resorts in the world; on the shores of Lake Mälar, to the west, there are historic palaces and castles to be visited; to the north you have the ancient university town of Upsala; or you can fare farther on a five-day steamer jaunt to the charming region of lakes and rivers in which Sweden's timber industry is carried on, and in which are to be seen some of the most picturesque waterfalls in all Europe; or, if you feel enterprising enough, you can fly a hundred and fifty miles or so south to the island of Gotland and inspect the mediæval city of Visby, one of the outstanding sights of Sweden—in short, there is enough to keep you delightfully occupied for many weeks.

If, however, you want to see something of the normal life of Stockholm, or if winter sports appeal to you most of all, or if for any other reason a

summer visit must be ruled out, I really don't think it matters greatly which of the early autumn or winter or spring months you choose for your journey. Some would advise September, while the weather is still fine; others would advise May; others December, so that you might see something of the Swedish Christmas. Personally, I prefer to see Stockholm enveloped in snow and to hear the sledge-bells ringing, and I would consequently be disposed to choose February or March, when you are certain to find the city wearing its snow-mantle and when the sledges are in constant use. Indoors, owing to the ubiquitous porcelain stoves or other efficient heating arrangements, you are protected from the rigours of the climate. Out of doors you don furs and over-shoes (when you are not skating or ski-ing or tobogganing), and the keen, exhilarating air is seldom cold enough to inconvenience you. There is a first-rate tramway service by which you can get to any part of the town quickly and easily. As for social amusements and entertainments, few capitals are better off. Visitors who don't know Swedish (and they, of course, form the immense majority) can get little or no enjoyment out of the Swedish drama, but there is always the Opera, and in the Stockholm cinema-theatres the art of the film is to be seen at its very best.

In regard to ski-ing, tobogganing, etc., should you tire of them and practised round about Stockholm, you can betake yourself to one or other of the great sporting Centres in the interior of the

country, say to Åre, in Jämtland, about 300 miles north-westwards of Stockholm. This is a kind of miniature Switzerland, and the principal hotel there, magnificently placed, offers everything that the most exacting visitor can want.

Finally, I must say a word about Dalekarlia, perhaps the most lovely province of Sweden, celebrated in particular for its old-world customs and the pictureque clothes still worn by its inhabitants ; and a word about Swedish Lapland, which is attracting every year more visitors, especially, of course, during the few weeks in July and August, when they can witness the wonderful spectacle of the midnight sun. Abisko is the place to go to for this. It is beautifully situated on the great lake of Torneträsk, and there is a very attractive and well-managed hotel there. In the same part of Swedish Lapland are the famous iron-ore mines of Kirunavaara and Gällivara. The little town of Kiruna and the great electric power-station of Porjus—the mainspring or heart of this entire industrial district—have become two of the most noteworthy "sights" of the kingdom.

The question of how to get to Sweden depends chiefly on whether you are a good sailor. If you are, you will be inclined to choose the direct route, namely by the Swedish Lloyd steamers from London to Gothenburg ; or, if you feel you would like to see something of Denmark also, you can go by the Danish route, Harwich-Esbjerg-Copenhagen-Malmö ; or, if you are not afraid of the air, you can get from London to Malmö by

the new aeroplane service, London-Amsterdam-Hamburg-Malmö, in eight or nine hours and for a charge of £10 8s. If you are a bad sailor, you will want to have as little as possible either of the sea or the air, and you will prefer to travel via Harwich (or Flushing) and Hamburg or Berlin and by the ferry service from Sassnitz to Trälleborg. There are through day-cars and sleeping-cars, first and second class, by this route from Hamburg to Gothenburg and from Berlin to Stockholm. Quite soon there will be through carriages also between Hamburg and Stockholm, as well as between Berlin and Gothenburg. The crossing of the Baltic is seldom rough, and when it is made during the night, good sleepers are scarcely aware of it.

Intending travellers to Sweden, by the way, will do well to provide themselves with a publication which they can buy at the Swedish Travel Bureau (corner of Coventry Street and the Haymarket), and which they will find most useful and informing. "A Book about Sweden" is its title. It is an excellent handbook to the whole country.

I may mention one other volume for the benefit of those readers who know French, namely, "La Suède", by M. André Bellessort (Librairie Academique, Perrin et Cie). It is one of the most delightful travel-books I have ever come across. M. Bellessort knows his subject extraordinarily well and writes charmingly. Of special interest and value are his chapters on certain aspects of modern Swedish literature. F. W

July 1926

CONTENTS

		PAGE
	PREFACE	vii
CHAPTER		
I.	GOTHENBURG	1
II.	SOME WEST-COAST WATERING-PLACES	12
III.	SWEDES AND ENGLISH	27
IV.	VISBY, PAST AND PRESENT	39
V.	OVER SOUTHERN SWEDEN WITH NILS HOLGERSSON	49
IV.	A WALK ROUND STOCKHOLM	62
VII.	MY STOCKHOLM DAY	73
VIII.	SWEDEN'S THREE GREATEST KINGS	87
IX.	ENGLISH WRITERS AND SWEDISH READERS	106
X.	BULSTRODE WHITELOCKE'S EMBASSY TO SWEDEN: (1) THE JOURNEY FROM LONDON TO UPSALA	113
XI.	BULSTRODE WHITELOCKE'S EMBASSY TO SWEDEN: (2) THE QUEEN AND THE AMBASSADOR	128
XII.	PORJUS AND KIRUNA	151

CHAPTER		PAGE
XIII.	HELSINGEGÅRDEN	158
XIV.	CARL LARSSON AND HIS SWEDISH HOME	162
XV.	DOWN THE GOTHA CANAL FROM STOCKHOLM TO VADSTENA	172
XVI.	IN DALECARLIA	178
XVII.	SELMA LAGERLÖF'S SAGA-LAND	187
XVIII.	JÖNKÖPING	195
	INDEX	205

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

MAP OF SWEDEN . . . . . *Front end-paper*
(*From a drawing by* A. E. TAYLOR.)

VIEW ON THE GOTHA CANAL: THE CANAL AT ITS NARROWEST . . . . . *Frontispiece*

FACING PAGE

THE ENTRANCE TO SKÅNEGÅRDEN, BÅSTAD'S UNIQUE HOTEL 18

HASSELBERG'S "SOLROSEN"—"THE SUNFLOWER" . 22

VISBY IN THE DAYS OF ITS GREATNESS. 40
(*From a Painting.*)

A REGATTA ON LAKE MÄLAR. IN THE CENTRE, STOCKHOLM'S FAMOUS NEW TOWN HALL 64

A CENTRAL POINT IN STOCKHOLM. IN THE FOREGROUND, STATUE OF CHARLES XII; BEYOND, THE ROYAL PALACE 66

THE BELLMAN TAVERN—"KÄLLAREN FREDEN" . 84

A SUMMER VIEW IN LAPLAND. 152

THE HOTEL AT ABISKO 154

A LAPLAND LAKE 156

A VERY TYPICAL CARL LARSSON DRAWING: THE FAMILY BATHING-PLACE 164
(*Reproduced from "Ett Hem", by Carl Larsson, by permission of the publisher, Albert Bonnier, Stockholm.*)

FACING PAGE

THE CASTLE, VADSTENA 176

A DALECARLIAN SCHOOL 180

AFTER CHURCH: A WINTER SCENE IN LEKSAND, DALECARLIA 184

MÅRBACKA, SELMA LAGERLÖF'S HOME 192

JÖNKÖPING FROM THE STADSPARK 196

SCENE ON THE ISLAND, VISINGSÖ 196

NOTE.—All the illustrations, except where otherwise acknowledged, are reproduced from photographs supplied by the Swedish Travel Bureau.

A WAYFARER IN SWEDEN

CHAPTER I

GOTHENBURG

Gothenburg was the comeliest city in the whole kingdom, somewhat smaller than Upsala; almost circular in shape and surrounded by ramparts and moats, with rectilinear streets of equal length, intersected by canals with arched bridges over them and with rows of small trees along their banks; so that it resembled greatly the cities of Holland. The houses were for the most part roomy, well-constructed, detached wooden buildings of two stories, and stood close together.

SUCH was the Gothenburg of two hundred years ago, as described by Sweden's foremost writer, August Strindberg, in his "Svenska Folket" ("The Swedish People"), a pleasant chronicle of Swedish life and customs in days gone by, which contrasts strangely with the examples of his work—the bitter satires, the tragic self-revelations, the morbid experiments in realism—that have made him famous throughout the world.

The description remains true in some degree as applied to that Gothenburg "within the moats" which still comprises the greater number of the essential features of the city. Many of its two-storied wooden houses

are still to the good—so "well-constructed" were they that some of them may outlive at least another century; its canals are almost unaltered, save for two short sections of them which made way for modernized thoroughfares some twenty years ago; and if it cannot now claim to be "the comeliest city in the whole kingdom" (for Stockholm long ago won that distinction), Gothenburg is at least "a good second" alike in beauty and in interest, whilst as a seaport it surpasses in importance the capital itself.

In the history of Gothenburg, Sweden's soldier-king, Gustavus Adolphus, plays a leading part, and, as is only right and fitting, his statue is given the place of honour in the great open square, called Gustav Adolfs Torg, which forms the heart of the town. Tradition has it that while Gustavus was standing one day in 1619 on the top of the neighbouring height of Otterhallen, scanning the estuary of the Gotha River and conversing with his courtiers and attendants, a small bird chased by an eagle flew to his feet for refuge, and that the king, taking this for an omen, at once gave orders for the building of a new city, well fortified, in the valley below. The statue commemorates this legend.

Gustavus Adolphus it was, certainly, who founded the great seaport. He had a statesman's eye, and saw that this mere strip—as it then was—of Swedish territory was of immense importance. To within a mile or two of the river mouth the entire coast, northwards and southwards, belonged to the kingdoms of Norway and Denmark, which were at that period united. It was essential that Sweden should retain free access to the sea, and this could be ensured only by the maintenance just here of a Swedish stronghold. His immediate

object was duly attained. But he was building even better than he knew: he was laying the foundations of that remarkable commercial prosperity which has begun to come to Sweden through Gothenburg during the last twenty years. The great destiny in store for the town remained unsuspected, indeed, until towards the middle of last century. The introduction of steam was the beginning of the new era in its existence.

If Gothenburg has a Dutch look about it, that is because, as a matter of fact, it was planned out and built by Dutchmen. One sometimes hears it likened to Amsterdam, but of all the cities of Holland, Amsterdam is the one with which it has least in common. To my eyes, indeed, it is reminiscent less of any Dutch town that I have seen than of Dublin. To look westwards from Gustav-Adolfs-Torg is to be reminded irresistibly of the canal-like Liffey, with its many bridges and its wide quays. This central artery of Gothenburg is cleaner-looking than the Liffey, and there is a greater air of wealth about the buildings all along its banks, but then the Gothenburg of to-day is extremely prosperous, while for generations past poor old Dublin has been pathetically down-at-heels. Well, Fortune may soon hold the balance more evenly between the two towns. I am one of those who hope to see the Irish capital revivified and made worthy of comparison with any city in the world.

"Gustavus planned this town on a grand scale," we are told by one of Gothenburg's historians.[1] "A number of Dutchmen were to be brought over in order to impart new ideas in regard to trade, industry and agriculture; consequently he drew up the charter of his city and arranged for its government on lines quite

[1] Axel Ramm, in a "Handbook for Travellers", issued by the Gothenburg Tourist Association.

unusual in Sweden. . . . During 1621 and 1622 the necessary influx of Dutchmen was effected, and the town was planned on Dutch lines with straight streets and canals, the whole to be fortified and surrounded by a moat. The harbour consisted of the Great Harbour Canal (*Stora Hamn Kanalen*), which could be closed by a massive boom, so that it was known in ordinary talk as *Stora Bommen*, or the Great Boom. The East Harbour Canal was closed by a smaller boom, *Lilla Bommen*, or Little Boom, which is to-day applied to that part of the harbour where the canal-boats are moored.

The Dutch element took the lead only for two or three decades ; then the Germans began to predominate for awhile, but by 1650 or 1660 the upper hand had been secured by the Swedes. It was about 1730 that the town began to grow really rich, through the establishment of trade with the East Indies. "During the Napoleonic Wars," Herr Ramm says, "Gothenburg became an entrepôt for British merchandise, which was dispatched hence, under the description of 'Swedish produce,' to different part of the Continent. The immensity of this traffic is borne witness to by the fact that in September 1810 no less than 1,124 merchant vessels were lying outside the harbour. This trade was highly profitable, and led also to the increase of English influence in the life of the city ; but with the fall of Napoleon all this ceased, and in 1816 and 1817 300 local firms went bankrupt."

There ensued a period of stagnation until 1840, when a steamboat service was started with Hull. Then came the completion of the famous Gotha Canal, making Gothenburg a western gateway for all central Sweden. That was in 1846. Ten years later the port's possibilities

were immeasurably increased by the introduction of a direct railway service to Stockholm. It now became obvious that the harbour would have to be remodelled in accordance with the new demands made on it. It had remained almost unaltered for over two hundred years. A process of deepening and enlarging and modernizing in every way was begun in 1859, and with very good results, as far as trade with England and Western Europe was concerned.[1]

But this was not enough. Except during the period of Napoleon's Continental System, Sweden's world-trade had not been very considerable, but at least it had been at first-hand. From about 1850, however, she had been getting 90 per cent. of her imports from distant countries at second-hand, through London and Hamburg. This change was due to the rapid progress made by England and Germany, as well as France and Holland, in the matter of steamboat traffic. Swedish business men put their heads together and resolved to make a big effort to retrieve their imperilled fortunes. They saw that Sweden must now have a really great modernized port. At first they were unde-

[1] "The commerce of Göteborg is now crowded up against one jetty far too small for its requirements," wrote Horace Marryat in his book, "One Year in Sweden", in 1862, "but the authorities, awake to the necessities of the case and convinced of the folly of messing matters, have caused a plan to be drawn out on a grand and liberal scale. New granite quays, founded on piles, are already in course of construction; and in a few years there will rise on the banks of the Gota Ælf a city of great magnificence. The steamers from Stockholm and the inland lakes will then possess a landing-place of their own. . . . A commercial seaport, its harbour bristling with shipping and steamboats, is a fine sight anywhere, but when favoured by Nature, as this is, surrounded by hills and rocks and a vast extent of water, it becomes doubly imposing. Göteborg may already be termed the Liverpool of Scandinavia."

cided as to which of their three possible ports should be taken in hand. Both Stockholm and Malmö had points in their favour. Finally, the claims of Gothenburg were recognized to be overwhelming. But much time was lost, and it was not until 1904 that the great problem was tackled in earnest.

That year was a doubly important one in the annals of Swedish shipping, for it was in October 1904 that Sweden's first trans-oceanic steamer service was initiated by the voyage of the Transatlantic Line's vessel "Kratos" to South Africa (in 1907 this service was extended to Australia) and that the Johnson Line's first steamer, "Oscar Fredrik," opened what was to become a regular service to Buenos Aires. The new Swedish East India Company began its operations two years later. Then in 1913 and 1915 respectively came the founding of the Svenska-Amerika-Mexico Line and (in some ways most important of all) that of the Svenska-Amerika Line, with the first voyage of the "Stockholm". Within a period of little more than a decade Sweden had resumed direct traffic with all parts of the world.

The harbour facilities have been much increased, and still larger improvements are in hand, but even with the most generous harbour accommodation, and with all the wonderful pre-war revival of its shipping industry, Sweden would not be in her present remarkably favourable position but for the war itself. This point has been effectively made by Mr. Sigurd Hansson in the Swedish Tourist Society's year-book for 1917. It was owing to the British blockade, he points out, that Sweden's trans-oceanic commerce passed into Sweden's own hands from those of the German middlemen "in a moment", whereas in normal circumstances this might have taken years, or even decades, to bring about.

Another effect of the war, not yet fully calculable, will be the transformation of Russia. Sooner or later Russia will be tranquillized; and in this new Russia Sweden may hope to have a commercial client of immense importance in place of the dreaded ogre of former times.

* * * * *

To get a panoramic view of Gothenburg one makes for the fortress-crowned hillock, "Skansen", in the south-western portion of the city. It is scarcely a "bird's-eye view"—we are not high enough up for that—but we get a good impression of the lie of the city and of its extent. To the north, stretching east and west, are the five miles or so of the estuary constituting the harbour. On our side of the semi-circular moat which cuts off the old town from its recent extensions is a pleasant strip of park-land, the eastern portion of which has been made into really charming botanical gardens, beautifully kept and with a delightful restaurant in it, in which in summer-time you can have all your meals out of doors. Immediately beneath us, and for two or three miles westwards and southwards, we see the less fashionable portions of the new town with the beginning of Slottskogen—Gothenburg's Bois de Boulogne—on its southernmost outskirts. To our right may be made out most of the handsome new buildings which have been erected during the last fifty years—the splendid new Art Museum opened in 1923, in time for Gothenburg's great International Exhibition; the University; the Vasa Church; the Archives House; the Town Library; the Rohss Museum of Arts and Crafts; the Chalmers Technical Institute; and a dozen others.[1] This is a very prosperous quarter. Towards

[1] The most impressive new building of all, the new Post

its south-eastern end may be descried the ultra-modern Lorensberg Theatre, which claims, with some show of reason, to be the leading playhouse of Scandinavia.

The word " prosperous " is apt to recur in all descriptions of the Gothenburg of to-day. The city plumes itself on its freedom alike from paupers and from illiterates. Mr. Barnes Steveni, in his recent work, " Unknown Sweden ", tells in this connection a story which is *ben trovato*. An Englishman, he says, who was struck by the absence of beggars in Gothenburg, was informed to his astonishment that a certain burgomaster of the town had once swept it clear of them at one stroke. This burgomaster, so the Englishman heard (and apparently believed !), had chartered two large ships, filled them with Gothenburg's loafers and ne'er-do-weels, and dumped the two shiploads one in England and the other in America !

As to the illiterates, there is also a tale to be told. Mr. Joseph Chamberlain was staying once at Gothenburg for a few days with a rich business friend who lived there, and who taxed his guest's credulity by the boast that there was not a single man in the city who could not read and write. Mr. Chamberlain was prepared to admit that the Swedes generally were very well educated, but this assertion sounded to him a little extravagant, so he suggested in his practical way that they should go together for a stroll through the harbour and put it to the test. His host assented, and presently they came upon a rough-looking individual in whom Mr. Chamberlain rather hoped to find one of the exceptions he was looking for. And, sure enough, the man

Office, is not in this district, but close by the railway station at the eastern end of the old town. It is the finest Post Office probably in Europe.

had to confess that he could neither read nor write. But "Joe's" triumph was of short duration. His illiterate, so it appeared from further questioning, although of Swedish parentage, had been born and bred in Birmingham!

It has been well said that Gothenburg "*has*, but *is not*, a centre of learning and culture". It is essentially a business city, but, to a far greater extent than is the case with most such cities, its merchant princes have in truth been princely in their endowment of the arts and sciences and of education generally. No account of Gothenburg would be complete which did not at least mention the names of some among its most famous commercial magnates—the Dicksons, for instance, and Keillers and Carnegies (it is curious how many of them are links between Sweden and Scotland), the Wilsons and the Wijks, Heinrich Rohss, Sven Renström, Charles Felix Lindberg, Julius Lundstrom, William Chalmers, Pontus Fürstenberg. There is something truly admirable in the way in which these men have helped to make the city which made them. Renström's bequests were chiefly to such useful institutions as the excellently arranged bath-houses which bear his name. Lindberg allotted his money to the specific purpose of embellishing the town in its outward aspects. Fürstenberg's wonderful art collection, displayed exactly as it used to be seen in his palatial house on the Hamn Canal, is now the chief glory of the new Art Museum. The Dicksons have given out their wealth lavishly and wisely in a hundred different directions, perhaps the most praiseworthy of all being the foundation for providing habitable homes for the poor, whilst one of the most spirited was the financing by Oscar Dickson (out of his own pocket) of all the successive Nordenskjöld

expeditions to the North Pole. Dickson's Harbour, one of Nordenskjöld's discoveries, was so called after this member of the family.

As regards art and science, not less than as regards social life and enjoyment, there is something of the same kind of amicable rivalry between Gothenburg and Stockholm as there is between Glasgow and Edinburgh. The people of Stockholm laugh at the Gothenburg accent. But in almost all respects—above all in football, in which it is generally the victor—Gothenburg holds its own against the capital. Its handsome theatres; the Lorensberg leading the way, are very enterprising. It has a really admirable concert hall, in which, for an extraordinarily small payment, you can hear music that would be a credit to any city in the world. With its *Trädgårdsföreningen*, or Botanical Gardens, Stockholm itself has nothing which can quite compare—indeed, I have seen no other European town so rich as Gothenburg in trees and plants and flowers.

I shall never forget my own first impression of Gothenburg in the early summer of 1919. A Swedish friend, Mr. Otto Hellberg,[1] had secured a room for me in the building—half-club, half-hotel—of the Clerks' Association—*Kontoristföreningen*—an imposing stone structure situated by the eastern section of the Moat, and overlooking the Botanical Gardens. It was a big, airy, excellently furnished room on the sixth floor, with a spacious balcony, and the view from it that May morning was delightful beyond expression—immediately below me a magnificent lilac-tree in full bloom, reflected in the quiet waters of the Moat; those charming gardens

[1] For many years private secretary to the late Mr. Arthur Diósy, the brilliant lecturer, one of my oldest and dearest friends.

spread out beyond ; and in the distance the picturesque rugged hills.

It is only by favour and through a personal introduction that one gets admission to the *Kontoristföreningen*, and I shall always feel grateful to my friend Hellberg for that most fascinating first glimpse of his cherished Gothenburg.

CHAPTER II

SOME WEST-COAST WATERING-PLACES: LYSEKIL, BÅSTAD, ARILD, FALSTERBO

STRÖMSTAD, more than a hundred miles farther north than Lysekil, would be the proper place to begin with were this a guidebook and were its author a competent guide, but I have never visited Strömstad, and it was night-time when I passed it once on the steamer on my way down to Gothenburg from Christiania. "A great depot of oysters and lobsters", Baedeker called it in 1912, as well as "a favourite watering-place (with mud and sea baths)". The only thing I myself know about the little town and its vicinity I found in a book rather off Baedeker's beat—a thing connected with the careers of two of the most famous of all Sweden's sons, her strangest man of thought and her boldest man of action, Emanuel Swedenborg and Charles XII. Thousands of volumes tell how Charles XII met his death on 30 November, 1718, besieging Frederickshald, the Norwegian frontier-town to the north-east of Strömstad, but there is one curious feature of the siege generally overlooked, namely that the man of action had a very valuable ally on this occasion in the man of thought. It was Swedenborg, then in his thirty-first year, and already conspicuous in the world of science and scholarship, who "contrived to transport over hill and dale, by rolling-machines of his

own invention, two galleys, five large boats, and a sloop from Strömstad to Iderfjol, a distance of fourteen miles. By this operation the king found himself in a situation to carry out his plans ; for under cover of these vessels he transported on pontoons his heavy artillery, which it would have been impossible to have conveyed by land, under the very walls of Frederickshald." [1]

As watering-places, Strömstad and Lysekil are in some measure rivals, but the former appeals more to the elderly and valetudinarian, the latter to the young and athletic. A "Swedish Trouville" Lysekil has been styled. It is as un-English in its aspect as it is un-French, but a "Swedish Cowes" would be a less misleading title, for Lysekil is really famous for its yachting rather than for its bathing. It is a yachtsman's Paradise. On any sunny day in June, July or August—and in these latitudes most of the summer days are sunny—you may see some scores of sailing-vessels of all sorts and descriptions flitting hither and thither delightfully over the encircling harbour. Vessels of all sorts and descriptions, but all of them seemingly Swedish. A Danish flag or two and a Norwegian flag or two—that is all. To the yachtsmen of the rest of the world these might be unknown waters.

The little town itself is very typical of this part of Sweden—a scramble of wooden houses for the best places on an irregular hillside of almost barren rocks, with a stately, steepled church of granite upon the highest rock of all. Here and there are more ambitious buildings of brick. For the most part, however, it is a town of wooden buildings—rather drab in colour when I saw them in 1919, for paint was still dear owing to the war —erected on immensely solid granite foundations.

[1] "Life of Swedenborg", by Garth Wilkinson.

The roofs are largely of reddish tiles. Not a strikingly picturesque little place, but, like the great majority of Swedish towns, most admirably neat and clean.

As a bathing resort Lysekil must be admitted to be at first sight, at least in the eyes of foreign visitors, a bit of a disappointment. Here, as in most other Swedish seaside places, men and women bathe apart. To one side of the quay are the bathing establishments, octagonal wooden constructions, each with dressing-boxes for some forty or fifty persons. You can look down into them from a rocky promontory, which stands just beyond the men's establishment, and round which there is a footpath affording splendid views out to sea. When not actually in the water, the men—fine fellows most of them, nearly all stark naked—stand or sit or lie about in every imaginable attitude, basking in the sun. From the women's establishment we are at a little distance, and we catch but tantalizing glimpses of shapely forms all very correctly attired. All? Well, if you were so indiscreet as to let your gaze linger, there is no knowing . . . If you are familiar with Zorn's pictures, or have seen something yourself of the primitive bathing habits prevalent farther inland and in secluded bays along the coast, you will be surprised at nothing. You will have learned that the Swedish daughters of Eve, when they are so minded, are not afraid to bathe in Eve's own fashion.

At five o'clock or so all Lysekil congregates together outside the principal restaurant adjoining the quay and drinks tea and coffee, nicely served by comely waitresses, and listens to music. It is a well-to-do assemblage, the ladies for the most part quietly dressed in white and black. Small girls in Swedish national costume may make a welcome splash of colour here and there. One

sees few beautiful faces, but many that are extremely pleasant and interesting and attractive. Fair hair predominates, for Lysekil is very typically Scandinavian. It is too remote for the globe-trotting visitors you meet at French or Dutch or Belgian watering-places—too remote at present, that is to say. We are still in the antiquated age of trains and steamers and automobiles. With the development of the aeroplane things will soon be different.

Alongside the quay are moored in great numbers the strongly built, roomy sailing-boats which ply for hire —" Koster " boats they are called, taking their name from a neighbouring island. They are very sensibly contrived vessels, in which a party of a dozen holiday-makers can cruise comfortably, and you can hire one for the morning or the afternoon or the whole day, as suits you best, and at a very reasonable price. In one of these you may sail for hours through the ever-changing scenery of the adjacent fjords, disembarking here and there for explorations on foot or for picnics. Or, if there be no nervous sailors among you, you may make for the open sea and resume acquaintance with that friend of our earliest school-days, the Skagerrack. In either case the return to harbour at sunset will be the crowning pleasure. The whole conformation of this coast-line of picturesque promontories and rocky islands might have been designed as a frame for the setting sun. Darker and darker they grow as the sky takes on its myriad colours . . . An exquisite ending to the day.

A very remarkable spot, Lysekil, with its contrasts of old and new, of humble toil and luxurious idleness. It is situated at the mouth of a fjord—Gullmar Fjord—and as a fishing-village it has been in existence for many

centuries—indeed, its origins are primeval. In its vicinity have been found evidences of human occupation going back nine or ten thousand years before the beginnings of our history—hieroglyphs, runes and tombs of greater age than have been discovered anywhere else in Europe. As a place of pleasure it may be said to date only from 1857, when the bathing establishment was instituted and when the first of its modern villas were erected. Since then this fashionable resort, with its excellent hotels, has grown and thriven side by side with the primitive fishing-village, the latter remaining almost entirely unaltered and unspoilt. Nowhere in the world, probably, has a human community achieved its happiness and comfort more successfully upon such a barren soil—in fact, the very word " soil " can scarcely be applied to the foundations, mostly of granite, upon which Lysekil has been built.

Needless to say, Lysekil has much to offer its visitors in the way of fishing, whether out at sea, in the bay, or along the fjord. Herring, mackerel and plaice abound, and there is no lack of cod and eels, to say nothing of lobsters, crabs, etc., which are very plentiful. Just opposite it is another old fishing-village named Fiskebäckskil, also a great resort for holiday-makers, but more famous for the biological station which the Stockholm Academy of Sciences has established there.

Between Lysekil and Gothenburg the coast is protected from the occasionally wild winds and rough waters of the Kattegat by an endless succession of small islands, mostly barren and of no interest. Only one of them calls for mention, Marstrand. On the eastern side of Marstrand is a small town of the same name—a bathing-place which has charms of its own, and to which some

three thousand Swedish holiday-makers find their way regularly every year. An old fortress, now disused, made it in old days a place of military importance and won it, rather absurdly, the name of the Gibraltar of the North.

Were we salmon-fishers, my readers and I, we would now, ignoring the pretensions of a score of other little places along this coast, take our tickets from Gothenburg to Falkenberg, some seventy-five miles to the south; but it is many years since I tried to catch a fish of any sort, and that was not with a rod, so Falkenberg means nothing to me.

Nor does Halmstad, a little farther south, except geographically as the capital of Halland. It is a convenience to be able to remember the names and positions of the Swedish provinces. The easiest to master are the four southernmost: Halland, a long, narrow strip, beginning just below Gothenburg and including the semi-circular bay across which Halmstad looks at Båstad; Skåne, in shape a miniature Spain, its western side washed by the Sound, its south and east by the Baltic; Blekinge, north and east of Skåne; and, above it, Småland, one of the largest and most interesting provinces of all.

Båstad, when the last edition of Baedeker's Scandinavia appeared thirteen years ago, was a hamlet of such scant importance that it could be dismissed in less than a line, but now it is not only a very thriving little holiday resort, but famous throughout the kingdom for its unique hotel, Skånegården. Skånegården, in its old-world, semi-monastic way, is a really beautiful building. Its stately portico, flanked by pillared cloisters, opens upon an exquisitely kept garden with an ornamental pond in it. One of its three sitting-rooms has a groined

vault and is decorated with carpets and tapestries woven for it by Swedish peasant workers. Most of the furniture was specially designed for it by its architect, Herr Gutler, of Stockholm. Everything about the establishment is in keeping, and it is controlled by a refined and charming manageress, who welcomes you on arrival and soon makes you feel much more at home than in any ordinary hotel. Skånegården is the venture—one might perhaps call it the hobby—of one of the Nobels, a nephew of the famous millionaire, who made out of explosives the immense fortune, part of which is now being expended annually upon Peace, Science and Literature prizes. It is at once an architectural gem of rare charm and a very interesting experiment in the ancient art of inn-keeping.

Båstad is still quite a small place, with only about 700 inhabitants, over and above its summer visitors. It has a fifteenth-century church, and some of its houses also are very old. It is perhaps the prettiest spot to be seen anywhere on this coast, although some would maintain that Arild, somewhat similarly situated fifteen miles or so to the south, on the Skelder Vik, has better claims to that title. Båstad stands on the slope of a high ridge, Hallandsås, and it is girt round with lovely beech woods; Arild is picturesque in a more rugged fashion. In both places you are apt to meet artists and writers and men and women who have made their mark in the world. It was at Arild, in a pleasant villa very individual in style with a wide verandah overlooking the rocky coast, that Kammarherr Thorsten Nordenfelt [1]—"Nordenfelt of the Gun"—used to spend his summers during the last decade of his long life. It

[1] Kammarherr = Chamberlain to the King, a title conferred on Mr. Nordenfelt by King Gustav V.

THE ENTRANCE TO SKÅNEGÅRDEN, BÅSTAD'S UNIQUE HOTEL

had been a life of wonderful energy and success for the most part, though with disappointments and set-backs. But for a stroke of bad luck, for instance, he might have been even more famous for a Nordenfelt submarine boat than for that epoch-making machine-gun; and the gun itself, while it enabled him to live for a long time in England at the rate of £10,000 a year, entertaining more lavishly, and making a greater mark in society, than any other Swede in London, ended by ruining him, for it involved him in legal proceedings which swallowed up all his profits. Next, his sight failed him almost completely; and then, when he was seventy, came the worst blow of all—the death of his dear wife, a Lancashire woman. Now he was all alone, for they had had no children. But the noble-hearted old fellow—I write of him as I knew him in 1919–1920, his seventy-eighth and last year—remained brave and kind and unselfish, and normally as cheerful as though he had never had a trouble. Of course, "ruined" when applied to men of the Nordenfelt stamp is apt to be a relative term. He was not literally ruined—he had too many grateful and affectionate friends for that. During his days of wealth he had been splendidly generous and benevolent, and when his money was almost gone a few of them banded together and provided him with a pension adequate to his needs. He was able to winter in Stockholm in a comfortable little *dublett*—the term they use there for a bachelor's flat of two or three rooms—and to build himself the Arild villa. And in this connection I think I may now record something which he told me but which could not well be made public in his lifetime. Besides the group of close personal friends who stood by him in his hour of need there was one other man who gave token of regard and gratitude—a man who is now

world-famous, Sir Basil Zaharoff. In the early days of the machine-gun, and at a time when the great Money King of to-day was "at a loss for a job", Mr. Nordenfelt sent him as his agent to Constantinople to play at "diamond cut diamond" with the Turk. That was possibly the most crucial of all moments in Sir Basil Zaharoff's astonishing career. At all events, it was a moment never forgotten. Regularly every summer, on a certain date in July, there came to Mr. Nordenfelt from that former agent of his a cheque for a round sum—a sum round enough to be most serviceable, but not so round as to hurt a very proud man's feelings; and, in addition, regularly every week, year in, year out, a copy of his favourite French journal "L'Illustration", addressed in the sender's own hand.

Hälsingborg and Malmö are in a sense watering-places, but they are much more than that, Malmö coming third in importance among the cities of Sweden and Hälsingborg fifth. To most of us Hälsingborg is interesting mainly as the *vis-à-vis* of Helsingör, Shakespeare's Elsinore; you can see on the other side of the Sound quite distinctly the great castle of Kronborg standing where one may suppose to have stood Hamlet's more ancient stronghold. One thinks inevitably of Hamlet as one loiters in the open-air restaurant on the terrace in front of Kärnan, a massive brick tower, 102 feet high, which dominates Hälsingborg. The exact age of this building is as uncertain as the exact date at which Hamlet lived (if we are to admit that he ever lived at all [1]), but one likes to imagine the Danish Prince among its frequenters. This would certainly be the

[1] The Danes declare that, if he ever lived, it was in Jutland, not at Helsingör.

point upon which Hamlet's eyes would most frequently have rested when he sat on his own battlements looking out to sea. After once visiting Hälsingborg, such thoughts will always recur to one, no doubt, during performances of the play. In the Ghost scenes one will peer into the darkness and imagine one can descry afar off the lights of the Swedish city twinkling. Perhaps one will seem even to hear the twentieth-century strains of the Kärnan terrace orchestra, punctuated with the clattering of tea and coffee cups.

There is a steam ferry running nine or ten times a day between Hälsingborg and Helsingör, and the crossing takes only twenty minutes, so most English visitors are tempted to go over, if only as pilgrims to Hamlet's supposed grave,[1] which is at Marienlyst, a little bathing-place to the north of Helsingör—there is a stone pyramid above it. Sober-minded Danes have scruples of conscience about conniving at what they feel amounts almost to a hoax, and they think that the "grave" ought to be levelled with the ground. On the other hand, the municipality of Helsingör does not want to loosen its grip on the chief tourist attraction of the town. By way of a compromise, it has been proposed that a handsome memorial should be erected where the alleged grave is now situated, with a statue of Shakespeare and with bas-reliefs showing the principal scenes of the tragedy.[2]

[1] "When we inquired about Hamlet's grave, we were told by a sarcastic Dane—the time being autumn—that it was not usually built up before the spring, in time for English and American tourists to carry it away in chopped-off morsels during the following summer" (Miss F. M. Butlin, in her charming book, "Among the Danes").

[2] So Herr Viggo Cavling, of Copenhagen, stated in a letter to "The Times", dated 28 July, 1925.

At Hälsingborg I have spent only a few hours. At Malmö I have stayed three nights on three separate occasions, and I have wandered agreeably through most of its streets and along the banks of its canals, but there my acquaintance with the place ends. Hälsingborg is hilly and Malmö is quite flat, yet the two cities have much in common. Big modern buildings predominate in both, while in each you come suddenly across quaint wooden houses hundreds of years old. Both cities have excellent hotels. Kramer's, at Malmö, must be one of the best-managed hotels in Sweden. It is one of several Swedish hotels, by the way, cultured enough and large-minded enough to possess a copy of the "Nordisk Familjebok", which is to the Swedes what the "Encyclopædia Britannica" and the "Dictionary of National Biography" together are to us. At Kramer's you find the great "Familjebok" at your service in a handsome bookcase, well supplied with other works of reference, in a most comfortable and attractive reading-room. The only drawback to the hotel is that in some of the outer bedrooms you are exposed overmuch to the noise of the neighbouring traffic, more particularly to what Andrew Lang used to call the unmannerly grunt of the motor-car.

Malmö is enriched by one really beautiful work of art, a bronze statue called *Solrosen* ("The Sunflower"), one of the masterpieces of the sculptor, Hasselberg. It is charmingly placed in the centre of a lawn, with trees encircling it, but not too near. As you may see even from the photograph, it is a thing of exquisite loveliness.

From a British standpoint, perhaps, Falsterbo is the most attractive of all the bathing-places along this

HASSELBERG'S *SOLROSEN*—'THE SUNFLOWER'

coast. Geographically, it corresponds almost exactly with our own Land's End, but in its general aspect, with its flat and bleak and sandy shore, along part of which lies one of the best of the few golf-courses in Sweden, it is reminiscent rather of Westward Ho—it might, perhaps, be described as a Westward Ho with the climate of North Berwick. The air-service now established between London and Malmö (via Amsterdam, Hamburg and Copenhagen) has brought it within a day's journey from England. Quite conceivably, therefore, it may become popular presently with English pleasure-seekers tired of holiday resorts nearer home.

Swedish summer resorts, it must be admitted, are not places for everyone—not even for everyone with an inclination towards new experiences. To begin with, they are apt to lack gaiety. The Swedes take their pleasures, if not more sadly than the English, at least more sedately. At Brighton or Margate or Southsea, or even at small holiday places like Sidmouth or St. Ives, there is always a certain amount of fun and liveliness along the sea-shore, and it is only the over-refined high-brow who despises in all moods the nigger minstrel and the pierrot. At the Swedish bathing-places there are practically no such forms of frivolity, and there are no donkeys for children to ride, no theatres or music-halls, not much even in the way of cinemas—at Falsterbo there is no cinema at all, and even the bathing itself lacks animation. There is, indeed, mixed bathing there, as at Mölle, near Arild, and at two or three other of the west-coast holiday resorts, but there is no special bathing hour. You just have your swim in the company of your particular associates, and there's an end to it. There is nothing much to look on at, as at Trouville or Ostend or Dieppe. There are very few rowing-boats

about, and there seems never to be anything in the way of aquatic sports.

So much by way of warning ; but even when due note has been taken of all such drawbacks, this Land's End of Sweden has a fascination of its own. The climate during the summer months is delightful, the air invigorating in the extreme ; the one big hotel (a picturesque white building with red-tiled roof) is very comfortable and pleasant and well managed ; the *cuisine*, as usual in Sweden, is quite excellent, and there is good music (not Jazz !) in the charming dining-hall. There is much dancing also, either in the dining-hall or out-of-doors or in a concert hall which adjoins the main building, and there are some quite good tennis-courts.

Falsterbo, by reason largely of its proximity to Germany and Denmark, has a slightly cosmopolitan atmosphere about it, although, of course, the great bulk of its visitors are Swedish. During my brief stay in its big hotel, the most notable personage there was a Dane, the eminent scholar and critic, Dr. Georg Brandes, Copenhagen's most famous citizen since Hans Andersen.

It was strange and very pleasant to see that once-strenuous and combative pioneer in the world of thought taking things easily now in his peaceful and serene old age. Save for the friend who was with him, he kept entirely apart from everybody, but everybody knew him by sight. I had always been interested in Dr. Brandes since the evening, some twenty-five years before, when he was on a visit to London and was the guest of honour at a dinner given by the New Vagabond Club. That was *not* an occasion to remind him of, for our chairman introduced him to us as " the distinguished Norwegian novelist " !

By good luck, however, I had a sufficiently good

pretext for seeking conversation with Dr. Brandes one afternoon before I left, as not long previously I had been present at a lecture on him and his career at the Bermondsey Book-Shop—an excellent lecture given by its manager, a Dane, who, as a boy, long ago, had listened to Dr. Brandes' own lectures in Copenhagen. This was a matter of which it might, I thought, gratify him to hear. The very obliging and tactful young *maître d'hôtel*, Herr Holm, arranged our meeting, and the dear old gentleman was amiability itself. He held forth on a variety of subjects—Copenhagen, Stockholm, London, Paris, Anatole France, his own works in general, and his book on Disraeli in particular, and half a dozen other matters. For many years past, he told me, his correspondence had been so large that it occupied him for three or four hours every morning—he had to write on an average forty letters before he could begin his day's work. Many of these letters were to decline, as politely as he could, requests for interviews. He had, he complained smilingly, come to be regarded as one of the curiosities of Copenhagen, like its Round Tower. What with his correspondence and his regular work, he had long ceased to read any newspapers, except the Danish, and he did not give much time even to them. As to his own writings, he expressed himself rather mournfully but without bitterness. It was a misfortune, he declared, for a man to have to write in a language so restricted as Danish or Swedish—it was like talking in a patois. You had an audience of a mere handful. He envied the English authors their immense circles of readers. It was true that a dozen or so of his books had been translated into English and about thirty into German, but these were only fractions of his output. He had written over seventy volumes in all. And so

he rambled on very agreeably, emphasizing a point now and again by placing his hand gently on my arm.

About Anatole France he was particularly entertaining. He had been reading the rather sordid book about the great Frenchman which had just been written by a former secretary, and he condemned it severely for its bad taste and untruthfulness. He himself had known Anatole France long and intimately, and when living in Paris used to meet him every week. While lunching together on one occasion Anatole France was much preoccupied with the question what subject he should choose for a series of lectures he had promised to give in the Argentine. He had not been at all inclined to undertake this lecturing tour, but he had been offered a very large and tempting price. But what in the world was he to lecture about? He must lecture upon something that he really knew about—should it be Rabelais?

"No, no, no!" Brandes had exclaimed in reply. "You are quite, quite wrong, my dear France! In the first place, Rabelais is very dull and very indecent, and all the ladies would have to leave the room at once. In the second place, it isn't in the least necessary for you to lecture on anything you really know about. What people want to hear about is themselves. All you have to do is to tell your Argentine listeners how clever and beautiful they are and your tour will be an immense success."

And Dr. Brandes smiled happily over his little piece of cynicism. It wasn't really cynicism, he maintained; it was the absolute truth—a truth of general application. If I should ever deliver a lecture to Swedes it was a truth I should bear in mind—"Don't talk to them about England or Scotland or Ireland or Wales, Mr. Whyte—talk to them about themselves".

CHAPTER III

SWEDES AND ENGLISH

"SWEDES and English"—alike the idea and the title of this chapter were suggested to me by that curiously informing and interesting book, "French and English", by Philip Gilbert Hamerton.

Mr. Hamerton, an Englishman of wide and deep culture, had lived in France nearly half his life, and had met and talked with and studied almost every type of Frenchman; I write of Sweden after only a short residence in the country and only as an intelligent ignoramus—if I may venture to call myself intelligent. But just as Mr. Hamerton was married to a Frenchwoman, so have I the advantage of being married to a Swede, and I think I may claim to have some measure of that cosmopolitan detachment which enabled him to hold the balance with such marked fairness between his wife's compatriots and his own. Perhaps my detachment is even greater than his, for he was English and I am Irish, though educated in England, and appreciative of England—on this side idolatry!

As it happens, the first thing in Sweden that strikes an Irishman—even a somewhat anglicized Irishman like myself—is that the Swedes in their attitude towards foreigners are almost more English than the English. They are, most of them, very cold and stiff and shy until you know them well. I know a good many

Swedes well now—at least sixty or seventy, I should say—and, almost without exception, I like them; many of them I have found charming and delightful. But against the Swedes in general, as distinguished from these individuals, I most confess to harbouring a certain slight feeling of resentment. In France or in Italy I am able to enjoy the belief, or illusion, that people rather like me, even from the start. Wherever I may find myself on the Continent I try, as far as my acquired Anglo-Saxon self-consciousness permits, to be natural, friendly, sympathetic; the French and Italians reciprocate; the Swedes, for the most part, do not—not certainly in the trains, nor in the trams or streets or shops of the capital. It is of Stockholm that I am thinking chiefly; in the country and in the smaller towns one meets with much more amiability. Wherever I go in Stockholm I feel that I need a more winning exterior myself, a jollier manner, a readier laugh, to overcome the disconcerting shyness and stiffness and coldness of the people I meet. There is a guileful old Swedish general, very conspicuously free from these national defects, who, when visiting London, contrives to win kind treatment even from the haughtiest barmaids of the West End. Knowing, or pretending to know, only two words of English, he points first to a particular bottle, then to a glass, and says, in appealing tones and with languishing eyes, "Beautiful miss!"

I always feel the need of some such method in Stockholm.

Mr. Hamerton's book is divided up systematically into nine sections, one of the most noteworthy of which is entitled "Virtues". Truth, Justice, Purity, Temperance, Thrift, Cleanliness, Courage—these are the

seven virtues with which he deals, showing, by a wealth of significant details, how in some points the English excel, in some the French. I shall take these virtues as a starting-point, though considerations of space, no less than consciousness of my own ignorance, will debar me from attempting to follow Mr. Hamerton's almost scientific system of contrast and comparison. I can offer but a few quite superficial and disjointed notes.

Take, for instance, the first two virtues on the list—Truth and Justice. Immense themes! I know far too little of the Swedes to try to gauge the degree in which they possess either of these qualities. In regard to both I believe them to stand high. As to the third virtue, Purity—well, I should say that in regard to this also Sweden will stand comparison with most countries, despite its extraordinarily high percentage of illegitimate births. About the remaining four it is easier to speak. Cleanliness, beyond a doubt, is a pre-eminently Swedish characteristic. The dirt of London is torture to a housewife exiled there from Stockholm, and when she sees the best that an English washerwoman can do with her linen she weeps. Almost everything in Sweden is cleaner than in England. The immensely greater consumption of coal in England has, of course, a good deal to say to this, for coal and cleanliness are incompatibles. But in the main Sweden's superiority must be ascribed, I think, to a genuine passion for cleanliness and to the taking of much thought and trouble towards attaining it.

It is almost equally beyond dispute that lack of temperance—among the men only, not among the women—is one of Sweden's shortcomings. In the big towns especially, all visitors agree, you see a great many drunken men about the streets. They are not violently

drunk as a rule—you do not hear of their going home and beating their wives. They are cheerfully, convivially, noisily, foolishly drunk. That is apparently how you are apt to get drunk on Swedish *punsch* and Swedish gin, the favourite "tipples" of the country. The former is a very insidious beverage, for its strength is concealed by its sweetness. One great moral advantage it has over plain whisky or brandy: it ruins your digestion so speedily that there is no fear of its ever bringing you to the stage of delirium tremens.

Then as to the virtue of Courage. While in Sweden I have lived in the most peaceful of surroundings, undisturbed by so much as a dog-fight, or a run-away horse, or an enraged landlady, or a burglar, or a Bolshevik, so I have never seen a Swede in a tight corner; but of the many Swedes whom I know well there are very few as to whose physical courage I have the least doubt. My friend, Mr. Carl G. Laurin, one of Sweden's most accomplished essayists and critics, who deals with the subject in his delightful volume, "Folklynnen" ("National Characteristics"), expresses the hope and belief that in such a disaster as overtook the "Titanic" his countrymen would behave like Anglo-Saxons rather than like Latins.[1]

On the subject of Thrift, also, Mr. Laurin is a witness who should be heard. On the whole he seems to consider the Swedes unthrifty, especially those on the land. He tells a story illustrating the point:

"You had better put by a couple of hundred kronor for the winter," an employer advises Andersson, a farm-hand. "It mayn't be easy for you to get work."

[1] The phrase, without some qualification, seems to me very unjust to the Latins, but I shall not attempt to debate that point here.

"Well, but look at Pettersson!" Andersson replies. "Pettersson put a hundred and fifty kronor by last year, and he got work, and there he was with his hundred and fifty still!"

Both Andersson and Pettersson believed more in lotteries, probably, than in putting by. Lotteries are a very prominent feature of Swedish life, especially in the towns. There are fresh lotteries every month, with prizes ranging from five kronor to hundreds of thousands. This, of course, is not conducive to thrift. On the other hand, I have noticed few cases of individual extravagance in Sweden, and it is certain that the extreme poverty which goes with thriftlessness is rare indeed. The Swedish public authorities, I should add, exercise the highest kind of thrift—thrift in human lives. In no other country, probably, is better provision made for the care of the physically afflicted or for the education and well-being of children.

To the subject of Patriotism Mr. Hamerton devoted an entire section of his book. I have not his book by me, but I remember that, in talking of the tender love of Frenchmen not for France merely, but for the place where they were born, he cites the touching words of an old ballad:

> Rien n'est plus beau que mon village—
> En vérité je vous le dis!

Mr. Laurin, who was a student in Paris in his youth, and knows France well, agrees with Mr. Hamerton that devotion to their country is one of the finest qualities of the French, and in the course of an essay in which he holds up the French example for emulation by the Swedes, he recalls a very similar expression of this sentiment. He can never forget, he says, a street-

singer he heard on one of the Outer Boulevards chanting the praises of France, but this singer's praises were for *all* France. "Does anyone imagine that life is most joyous in Picardy?" thus went his song. "Then he is mistaken, for life is no less joyous in Normandy"—and so on, with Brittany, Burgundy, and all the rest! And the listeners all joined in the refrain: "Yes, one may live joyously wherever one lives in France!"

Mr. Laurin cannot imagine the singing of such a song in Stockholm, and he regrets the fact. The whole essay in question is a dirge over the decay of Swedish patriotism. I cannot help thinking that he exaggerates. He is a middle-aged Conservative, and youthful Sweden tends more and more towards Democracy. The patriotism of Democrats wears a somewhat different complexion, but it does exist. The young Swede of to-day is in many respects discontented with Sweden, but he has high hopes for her. And among Mr. Laurin's own contemporaries there is a much warmer love of country than he allows. The really extraordinary way in which Sweden has gone ahead in the last twenty-five years is in itself a manifestation of patriotism. The immense growth in Sweden's shipping, the rapid development of her industries, the scientific methods introduced into her agriculture, the magnificent new buildings that have sprung up in her cities, the whole wonderful impetus that has been given to the national energy—all these things are in their origin patriotic. At public gatherings and on occasions of historic rejoicing the names of Gustav Vasa and Gustav Adolf may not evoke such demonstrations of enthusiasm as are called forth in the United States—so we are told—by every mention of George Washington, but these national heroes are national heroes still. Mr. Laurin, it seems to me,

expects too much. His countrymen, as he is well aware, are not naturally demonstrative, and they are very self-conscious, but, to a foreigner certainly, they seem intensely patriotic. In their eyes no other scenery compares with their own lakes and forests. To their ears the poetry of no other language has such music as they find in Bellman and Tegnér and Fröding and Karlfeldt and the other patriot-poets of their native land.

There are few Swedish characteristics upon which Mr. Laurin has not touched suggestively in one or other of his various books, and as these books have an immense sale in Sweden, and he himself is one of the most representative men in the country, it may be interesting at this point—having done with the virtues—to compare notes with him as to some of the other attributes of his race.[1]

Among the defects on which he lays most stress are the indifference to general ideas which is exhibited by most Swedes, their absorption in themselves, their tendency to envy, and their lack of social gifts. That, "compared with Danes and Russians, Frenchmen and Americans"—he significantly omits the English!—"we are inconceivably dull talkers is a recognized thing", according to him; and he protests that anything more dreary and solemn than the atmosphere of a Swedish railway carriage full of people who have not been introduced cannot be imagined. Swedish envy, he explains, is rather a curious phenomenon, for it does not go with

[1] In noting what Mr. Laurin says, we have to remember that his remarks were addressed primarily to his own countrymen. Most of us have moods in which we are tempted to assume in this way the rôle of censor at home. Were he writing for a foreign public, Mr. Laurin would probably make out a better case for the Swedes.

covetousness. A Swede grudges wealth and luxury to others, but he does not hanker after them for himself. The German proverb, "Nothing for me, nothing for thee, so shall we both have nothing", well expresses this pecularity, he says. It is a peculiarity of which the Swede gets rid when he has emigrated to the States. The same man who rejoiced in Sweden over the docking of a fourth part of the very modest salary of a provincial judge will quite relish the exciting news that a Rockefeller has outwitted some opposition trust and cleared a profit of ten million dollars.

Among the better qualities Mr. Laurin claims for the Swedes, freedom from anything like aggressiveness or boastfulness or rudeness stands out prominently. In the preface to "Folklynnen", he admits, in a playfully malicious passage, that there *are* "brazen-faced Swedes", but he says they are as rare as "elegant Danes", "untidy Frenchwomen", and "retiring Americans". Generally speaking, Swedes, he thinks, are modest and unaffected and free from sentimentality, and they excel especially in their consideration for others and in their sense of justice. This book of his, which is very ingeniously and effectively illustrated, contains about half a dozen representations of Swedish types, which he takes good care shall show up well alongside any of the other national types included. One of them, a photograph of a burly scholar, stands for a good specimen of the mature Swedish male: confident, good-humoured, frank, cheery, friendly, strong, broad in body, and broad in mind; another, from a portrait by Sweden's most famous artist, Anders Zorn, gives us, in Fru Maja Llunglöf, Swedish female good looks at about their best.

To come back to manners. In Sweden, as in England

there are, of course, all sorts. The manners of the best type of Englishmen and Englishwomen are almost beyond criticism, especially in the case of those who have travelled widely and have become touched by the arts. Most foreigners, however, seem agreed that English manners generally are not good—cold and stiff and unsympathetic among the well-to-do, off-hand and thoughtless among the masses. There are, of course, exceptions—one considerable exception is the police. There was, perhaps, truth as well as wit in that saying of a Lord Mayor of London: "The City Police is not only the *best* civil force in the world—it is the *most* civil force".[1]

I have already indicated what I myself think of surface manners (so to speak) in Sweden. In some directions they are perhaps worse than in England. In the Stockholm trams, for instance, it is not usual for a man to give up his place to a lady—if there is not seating accommodation inside the lady must stand outside. But this is really a trivial matter generally, for the journeys are short; and at least Stockholm, thanks to the rational system of the queue, is spared the unseemly scrambling for places to be witnessed in London, after

[1] The Swedish policemen are, I think, just as civil, but the Swedes who stand out, perhaps, above all others by their admirable manners are the railway-guards. They are wonderfully kind and attentive, and disinterestedly so, for, unlike ours (excellent men, too, on the whole), they are above accepting tips. A South African visitor once, moved by the thoughtfulness and helpfulness of a Swedish railway-guard on one occasion, attempted, as tactfully as he could, to force a tip on him—quite in vain. "Well," he said smilingly, "you'll smoke one of my cigars, anyway?" and offered one with more confidence. The guard, smiling also, but resolute, refused. "Well, then," exclaimed the South African, "you'll shake hands with me!" To that there was no objection, and railway-guard and traveller parted sworn friends.

office hours especially, at such points as Piccadilly Circus and Trafalgar Square.

In the matter of salutations out-of-doors, and generally of the handling of hats, I must confess to being a believer in British customs. Surely an amicable nod of the head is sufficient greeting between youths of twenty, and even between men of thirty and forty and fifty, when they know each other well and meet continually. In Sweden, as in most parts of Europe, one must take off one's hat as ceremoniously to a university student or to one's fellow-clubman as to a lady or to the King or to the Archbishop of Upsala, or to a venerable man of genius. To me this seems absurd. And one must always keep one's hat off in the shops. Surely this is a very unpractical and inconvenient and quite unnecessary form of politeness, even in those countries where the shop-people themselves are most polite. For you are certain to need the free use of your hands, and your hat becomes an encumbrance and a nuisance; and when the shop-people are themselves *not* polite, you feel you are placing yourself at a disadvantage, that—if I may use the war witticism to which London shop manners gave so much point—you are exposing yourself unduly to the "counter-offensive".

As I near the end of the space to which I must restrict myself, a score of other points occur to me that call for treatment, especially in connection with this subject of manners. The small formalities, for instance, to which the Swedes are so much addicted are full of interest. At first some of these formalities are stumbling-blocks to the foreigner, but he gradually gets used to them and comes to recognize that they make for friendliness and urbanity. The one which is, perhaps, most important

and most difficult to adopt is that of saying to your host, *Tack för maten!* ("Thanks for the food!") after every meal, even if you are staying in his house a month. It sounds such a very materialistic expression! Most foreigners get through with it only in a perfunctory, embarrassed manner, but the Swedes themselves use it unceasingly in tones that are cordial and unaffected.

I have said nothing of woman's position in Sweden. Sweden has hitherto been essentially a man's country, and still is so, for the most part; but this is woman's century, and here, as elsewhere, she is coming to the front. Already women have attained a really good status as practising lawyers, and there are, of course, a great many women doctors as well as thousands of trained *masseuses*—a very thorough training they are given, much longer and more elaborate than in England. Even before the war the number of women and young girls employed in banks and other offices was proportionately much higher than in most European countries. There is, I think, very little sex-antagonism in Sweden. The men do not need the women much, except in the house—they are not dependent on them in any great degree for either amusement or inspiration. They are quite content with their own company—their newspapers and politics, their pipes and their *punsch*. They are good husbands and fond fathers. As youths, of course, they have their love-affairs, happy and unhappy, wise and otherwise, but Cupid takes rather a back seat in Sweden.

I have to leave many aspects of the life of Sweden untouched: religion—you may belong to the State Church long after you have ceased to be in any real sense a Lutheran, and it manages somehow to find room

within its fold for both Theosophists and Christian Scientists; education—no other country has so few illiterates; politics—the younger Socialists regarded the late Hjalmar Branting as an old Conservative; music—the Swedes point chiefly to Jenny Lind and Cristina Nilsson and to the splendid male choirs for which their two universities remain famous; and so with science, medicine, engineering, law, architecture, literature, and art and sport—these topics are too big for treatment at the tail-end of a chapter.

I must not conclude without noting one curious point about the *untravelled* Swede—a thing which surprises at first sight. This is his inability to see any difference between British and Americans, whether in appearance or in manner or in voice! An Englishman to the average home-keeping Swede is any man who speaks English, whether he come from London or New York, from Dublin or from Edinburgh, from Melbourne or from Cape Town. This blindness and deafness to characteristics of which we ourselves are all so conscious ought not, however, to seem astonishing, for the Swede himself in our own regions has a very similar experience. Although a Copenhagen accent sounds as comic to him as Harry Lauder's to a Cockney, very likely he will be taken for a Dane. Not one Englishman in a thousand can disentangle Danes from Swedes and Swedes from Norwegians. More often than not they are all guessed to be Germans. Do they fare any better in the United States? I doubt it. There was an American admiral not long ago, who at a Danish banquet given in his honour when he was cruising in these latitudes thought to please his hosts by drinking to their "gallant Kaiser William II". He will never be forgotten in Scandinavia!

CHAPTER IV

VISBY, PAST AND PRESENT

COMPARATIVELY few English visitors have ever found their way to Visby, so I may perhaps assume that most of my readers know next to nothing about it. Until a lovely morning last August I myself knew only that it was a picturesque old place dating back to the Middle Ages and that it was the chief town of an island in the Baltic named Gotland.

The island's name points to the most noteworthy fact concerning its remote past, namely that it belonged to the Goths. The Goths frequented it on their voyages between what we may call their homeland in central Sweden and their principal markets in Russia and Northern Europe. Thousands of old coins, gold and silver, and innumerable other relics of ancient Greece and Rome and Arabia—some even of India and China—have been found, and are still continually being found, in and about Visby, testifying to the commercial activities of the seaport in those distant days. In the course of time the Germans began to co-operate with the Goths, and Visby, already famous for its wealth and importance, joined the Hanseatic League and took at once a leading position among the Hansa towns. About 1293, however, Lübeck acquired the ascendancy, and Visby's glory then began to wane. So much one may learn from the encyclopædias, many of which proceed

to tell us that, some seven decades later, in 1361, Valdemar III of Denmark overran Gotland and won a bloody victory before the gates of its capital. An effective account of this episode is given by Miss Helen Zimmern in her well-known volume, "The Hansa Towns". Having cited a contemporary Danish description of the misdeeds of the terrible Valdemar and of the dread he inspired in the hearts of the Hansa leaders, who knew he would attack them as soon as his power at home was fully secured, Miss Zimmern proceeds:

"The first attack upon the Hansa towns was made by the Danish King in the shape of an interference with their fishing rights on Scania,[1] breaking the contracts which his predecessors, and even he himself, had made, and demanding extortionate fees for the renewal of time-honoured privileges. Diplomatic negotiations were entered upon, but Valdemar befooled the deputies from the cities, wasting their time with idle discussion of irrelevant matters and refusing to come to a real agreement. After long and fruitless debate the ambassadors of the Hansa towns departed home anxious and discouraged. Ten weeks after their return the cities were startled by the terrible news that Valdemar, in a time of perfect peace, without previous warning or declaration of war, had suddenly invaded the island of Gotland and seized, sacked and plundered the rich city of Visby, the northern emporium of the Hansa's wealth.

"Such a blow was aimed not only at Visby, but at all the Hanseatic towns; from that moment diplomatic negotiations with Valdemar were no more to be thought of. This act meant war—war at all costs and at all risks."

Interrupting her own narrative at this point, Miss

[1] The province which the Swedes call Skåne.

VISBY IN THE DAYS OF ITS GREATNESS
FROM A PAINTING

Zimmern cites the following passage from another contemporary document :

"In the year of Christ, 1361, King Valdemar of Denmark collected a great army and said unto them that he would lead them whither there was gold and silver enough and where the pigs ate out of silver troughs. And he led them to Gotland and made many knights in that land, and struck down many people, because the peasants were unarmed and unused to warfare. He set his face at once towards Visby. They came out of the town towards him and gave themselves up to the mercy of the king, since they well knew that resistance was impossible. In this manner he obtained the land and took from the burghers of the land great treasures in gold and silver, after which he went his ways."

Miss Zimmern herself proceeds :

"By a skilful *coup de main* Valdemar had, indeed, made himself master of Gotland, then under Swedish suzerainty, and of the wealthy city of Visby. His aim had been booty, and he had it in rich measure in the shape of gold, of fur, and silver vessels.

"Legend tells that the year previous to the attack Valdemar had visited Gotland disguised as a merchant, securing the love of a goldsmith's daughter, whose father held an influential position in Visby, and who, in her loving trustfulness, revealed to him the strength and weakness of the island and town, thus helping him to secure the spot that was rightly regarded as the key to the three northern realms.

"The inhabitants, unprepared, unarmed, had been unable to offer much resistance. It was a terribly bloody fight this that raged outside the walls of Visby ; the site of it is marked to this day by a cross erected on the spot where 1,800 Gotlanders fell. 'Before the

gates of Wisby the Goths fell under the hands of the Danes ' was the inscription." [1]

As was the custom of conquerors in those times, Valdemar entered the city, not by means of the gates that had been surrendered to him, but by a breach he specially had made for this purpose in the town walls. The gap is still pointed out to visitors.

Miss Zimmern concludes the story thus :

" When he had plundered to his heart's content, and after he had added to his title of the King of the Danes and Slavs that of the King of Gotland, Valdemar proceeded to return home in his richly laden ships. But it was decreed that he should not bring his booty to port. A great storm arose in mid-ocean. It was with difficulty that the King escaped with his life ; his ships were sunk, his coveted hoards buried in the waves.

" There are still shown at Visby the two fine twelve-sectioned rose windows of St. Nicholas' Church, in which, according to tradition, there once burned two mighty carbuncles that served as beacons to light the seamen safely into harbour in the day of the town's prosperity. These stones, it is said, were torn from their place and carried off by Valdemar. The Gotland mariner still avers that on certain clear nights he can see the great carbuncles of St. Nicholas' Church gleaming from out the deep.

" As for Valdemar's lady-love, whom it is said he abandoned as soon as his purpose was attained, she was seized on by the infuriated townspeople and buried alive in one of the turrets of the city walls, known to this day as *Jungfrustornet.*"

That, more or less, is the generally accepted notion of

[1] " Ante portas Wisby in manibus Danorum ceciderunt Gutenses."

what happened, although a modern Swedish writer, the compiler of a local guidebook of some merit, takes it on himself to treat the whole thing as legendary rather than historical; he even insinuates a doubt as to whether Valdemar ever invaded Gotland at all! In any case, it appears to be certain that there was no very ruinous sacking of the city at this period, for Visby managed to retain a status of some dignity until its final and fatal conflict with Lübeck about two centuries later.

After its pride had thus been humbled, Visby remained sunk in obscurity and distress until the end of the eighteenth century, when a number of men of note, scions of good Gotland stock—Donners, Stuurtzenbeckers, Calissendorffs, etc.—set the old place on its legs again as an industrial town and seaport; and since then it has grown steadily in favour and prosperity as a health resort. Now it is regarded, and with good reason, as one of the most interesting spots in all Scandinavia.

Donners—the name is not long in arresting your attention when you have landed, for you will have learnt that the Burmeister House (*Burmeisterska huset*) is the first place to make for, and you find it situated a few hundred yards to the left, in close proximity to the open space called Donners Plats. The house is called after the German merchant, Hans Burmeister, who built it in the seventeenth century on the site of an older dwelling. It is constructed of solid logs, painted a dark red, and grown over with ivy. It has been recently restored, and perhaps the fireplaces and the interiors of the rooms generally bear too evident traces of this, but they will look "genuine antiques" soon enough, and even now one is enabled excellently to

realize what a wealthy Visby burgher's home looked like more than two centuries since. The rooms on the first floor constitute a veritable little museum of old-time Swedish furniture and decoration.[1]

Adjoining this old house is an extremely pleasant garden restaurant, with a fountain playing in the centre, an ideal place in which to breakfast and to think out one's exploration of the city. Visby is quite a small place, of course, and you can see all its beauties after a fashion in a day, but it is well to study its map and to adopt some plan for your pilgrimage.

When, breakfast over, you emerge from the restaurant, you find that Donners Plats is situated in the middle of *Strand Gatan*, which may be called the principal street of the modern town; in the southern section of the street, to your right, are *Stadshotellet*, the chief hotel, and near it the residence of the *Landshöfding*, the Governor of the province.

It seems natural, however, now to bear to the left, and, after studying the outsides of some of Visby's very oldest houses and visiting its excellent historical museum, *Gotlands Fornsal*, to keep on until we get to *Kruttornet*, "The Powder Tower", one of the outstanding points of the city. A watch-tower it was in days of old, when Visby had many enemies and its defenders had to be continually on the alert.

Proceeding along *Studentalleen*, a pleasantly shaded walk on the inside of the great wall of the city, through

[1] Just beyond the Burmeister House, in an attractive modern building, with a well-laid-out rose-garden in front of it, are the offices of the Stockholm–Gotland Steamship Co., where Consul Ekman and his subordinates are always ready and eager to supply information to visitors, who may count on being received with the utmost courtesy and cordiality. Consul Ekman is a great power throughout Gotland.

the openings in which one penetrates down to the beach, we pass on the right the charming Botanical Gardens, laid out in 1856. At the southern end of these lie the ruins of the once lovely church of St. Olof (Gotland's patron saint), erected in the thirteenth century but destroyed three hundred years later; *Strandmuren*, the section of the city wall between the Students' Allee and the sea, runs quite straight in a north-easterly direction along the coast for half a mile or so until we come to *Jungfrutornet*, the turret in which, according to tradition, Valdemar's lady-love was immured; it is a small turret, and apparently of little use for any purposes of defence. Just beyond it, forming the north-eastern corner of the wall, is a larger turret, called *Silverhättan*, which is said to have been roofed originally with plates of silver. Here, making a right angle, the wall goes in a north-westerly direction as far as *Norra Stadsposten*, the Northern Gate, through which may be seen, just outside the city, the ruins of the thirteenth-century church of St. Göran—our own St. George—which was connected with a hospital for lepers.

From the Northern Gate the wall continues in semi-circular fashion, girdling the western and southern sides of the town until it ends in a ruined castle called *Visborgs Slott*, once the most famous stronghold on the Baltic, situated quite close to the quay at which our steamer arrived.

The walk round Visby along the whole of this wonderful old wall—10,000 feet in length and with thirty-seven towers—is most enjoyable, but at the North Gate one is tempted to break off and penetrate into the centre of the town in order to inspect the rest of the churches. Proceeding down *Odal Gatan* we reach first the Church

of St. Nicholas,[1] the church of the Dominicans, a very stately ruin, quite close to which is *Helgeandskyrkan*, the Church of the Holy Ghost, a thirteenth-century building restored in 1525. It is an octagonal two-storied structure of a kind unique in Sweden. You get a splendid panoramic view from the roof.

From *Helgeandskyrkan* it is only a few steps by *Norra Kyrka Gatan* to the cathedral of Sancta Maria, built by the Germans at the beginning of the thirteenth century and restored in 1892, the only one of the eleven churches now in use. Its nave is believed to date from as far back as 1400, when an earlier building—a church built in 1190—was burnt down. Its two western octagonal towers are early seventeenth century. From the cathedral you may turn northwards up *Biskops Gatan* to *Smedje Gatan*—"Smith Street"—to see the Church of St. Clement, also thirteenth century; bearing round to the south-west, and taking *St. Drottens Gatan*, you will pass on your right *St. Drottens Kyrka*, also known as the Church of the Holy Trinity, built about 1250, with a high tower; a little beyond which is the Church of St. Lars, believed to be a hundred years older and noteworthy in particular as being the only cruciform church in the town. Retracing our steps to *St. Drottens Gatan*, we emerge soon on the great central square of Visby, *Stora Torget*, on the south side of which are the ruins of a Franciscan convent, St. Catherine's—the most beautiful of all the ruins. St. Catherine's dates from about 1250.

[1] St. Nicholas of Bari, the Sankt Claus of Germany and Holland. His feast-day, in December, is the Children's Day in the countries of Central Europe that are still Catholic. The Dutch Calvinists, when they got rid of saints' days, transferred the traditional Children's Festival to Christmas and made Sankt Claus into the kind of fairy godfather whom we know as Santa Claus.

At the north-western corner of *Stora Torget* there is a little street which takes you into *St. Hans Gatan*, following which to the left you come to the ruins of two small churches which stood side by side, St. Hans and St. Per, both of very early origin, the site of St. Per being that of the "place of sacrifice"—*Vi*, offering, *by*, place—from which the town took its name. *St. Hans Gatan* continues in a westerly direction to some public gardens (a few minutes' walk from the castle) called *Slottsparken*, to the north of which runs the western end of *Strand Gatan*.

This is a painfully inadequate account of Visby—a place to be described by a poet or by an architect or by an archæologist, and I am none of these things. I shall break off here abruptly in despair of doing the subject justice, and shall atone for my own deficiencies by sending my readers to an excellent book in which they will find the churches not of Visby alone, but of the whole of Gotland, very fully and informingly dealt with, namely, "The Cathedrals of Norway, Sweden and Denmark", by Mr. Francis Bumpus. I shall cite just one passage from it. Mr. Bumpus has remarked that Visby itself is so pleasant a place to lounge in that few visitors care to leave it, but that to form any notion of the ecclesiology of the island generally one must go farther afield. "Visby," he points out, "was a great mercantile centre, attracting commerce from all parts of Europe, and, beyond that, was a distributing-point for the products and manufactures of the East, which found their way more readily and safely by the route of the Black Sea and the Volga to Visby as a depot than by the sea route of the pirate-infested Mediterranean and the subsequent dangers of the stormy Atlantic. As a free republic and refuge to natives of all countries not

in accord with the government of the time, it presented, as London does now, a refuge from danger on the one hand, and, on the other, greater facilities for commerce. Thus it happened that there settled in Visby a large number of foreigners, who, though, as history proved, were thoroughly loyal to their adopted country, were nevertheless clannish, and each clan or ci-devant nationality built a church for their own religious requirements, and they built on the style which was prevalent at the time in their late domicile. Thus it happens that the churches of Visby are of very varied architecture, and, practically, by no means represent the type which is not only prevalent but universal in the rest of the island.

"In a country so specially isolated as Gotland, possessing great wealth and a considerable population, it is not surprising to find a local architecture of great interest, while, for the reasons I have named in reference to cosmopolitan Visby, no one style or arrangement of building holds undisputed sway."

I must not conclude this chapter without mentioning that an enthusiastic Swedish archæologist, Professor C. G. Brunius, of Lund University, made a profound study of the ruins and art treasures of the whole of Gotland during the years 1853–1866 and incorporated the results in three long volumes. It is pathetic to reflect that the professor's scholarship and devotion went quite unrewarded financially, and that, to his chagrin, he could not even get together enough money to defray the cost of the drawings which would have added so greatly to the value and interest of his work. In these days of sumptuous books on art it seems a shame that "Gotlands Konsthistoria" should be left in its drab old clothes. One would like to see it re-issued, elaborately illustrated, in a really beautiful *édition de luxe.*

CHAPTER V

OVER SOUTHERN SWEDEN WITH NILS HOLGERSSON

SWEDEN existed before Selma Lagerlöf, but a Sweden without Selma Lagerlöf is almost as unimaginable now as a Scotland without Sir Walter Scott. There are perhaps some few Swedes who know next to nothing of the annals of their country, but there is probably no Swede living who is entirely unacquainted with the story of Gösta Berling or who could not tell you something about "the wonderful journey" of Nils Holgersson.[1]

To Gösta Berling we shall come presently when we reach Värmland and the authoress's ancestral home, but this is a good moment for making ourselves acquainted with little Nils. Before quitting Southern Sweden, we shall do well to take another glance at it through his eyes.

The history of Nils Holgersson's adventures begins thus:

"Once upon a time there was a little boy of about fourteen years old, tall for his age and loosely built and with flaxen hair. He was not very well behaved.

[1] "The Wonderful Journey of Nils Holgersson through Sweden" was written in 1906 specially for children, and it is read in every elementary Swedish school. "Gösta Berling's Saga" had already made Selma Lagerlöf famous.

Eating and drinking were what he liked best, and what he liked next best was being mischievous."

In short, a troublesome boy, Nils, and a great worry to his parents, whose only child he was. But he had good qualities latent in him, and how his amazing fate brought those good qualities into play is told incidentally in the book.

One Sunday morning, when he ought to have been reading a terribly long sermon—having refused to go to church with his father and mother and having been given this task as a punishment—Nils fell asleep. On waking, he saw that his mother's big oak-chest in which she kept all her finery was wide open, although she had shut it carefully before going out, and on the edge of it there was standing a tiny hobgoblin, or *Tomte*, about six inches in height, with a queer, beardless, crumpled little face and wearing knee-breeches, a very long black cloak, and a wide-brimmed black hat. Recovering from the first sensation of astonishment and alarm, Nils asks himself what he shall do about this extraordinary little visitor. How would it be to take hold of him and shut him up first of all in the big oak-chest? Whilst so pondering, the boy catches sight of a net for catching flies hanging on the wall. Taking it by the handle, he throws it swiftly over the hobgoblin and has him a prisoner. Now there ensues a parleying between capturer and captured. The hobgoblin begins by pleading that for years past he has befriended the Holgersson family, but, finding Nils obdurate, he proceeds to offer ransom—he will give a fine silver spoon and an old gold coin as big as a watch if only Nils will release him. Nils, thus tempted, agrees and does release him, but immediately regrets that he did not hold out for more, and makes

an effort to recapture him in the net. Next moment he receives such a tremendous smack on the ear that he feels his head has burst, and he tumbles to the ground senseless.

When he comes to himself, he discovers gradually, to his intense dismay, that he has dwindled down to a size not so very much bigger than his hobgoblin enemy, of whom there remains no trace. He does not *feel* in any way altered and he is still wearing his own clothes, but tables, chairs, books, bookcases now seem to him gigantic. The door is open, so he goes forth into the farmyard to see how matters stand there. All is as before, except that here also everything looks gigantic and that, to his surprise, he finds he can talk with the cows and the hens and the cat in their own language. He also discovers, to his chagrin, that he must now mind what he says to them. He is no longer big enough to frighten away the hens when they come in his way, and as for Minet, the tom-cat—well, that gentleman has some old scores to pay off against Nils, and Nils is terrified. But Minet, luckily, is magnanimous, and forgives.

For all the other thousand-and-one circumstantial details of Nils Holgersson's experiences at this and other stages of his transformation you must go to Selma Lagerlöf's own pages.[1] I must hurry on to the point where, astride on a big young gander, he embarks upon his trip all over Sweden. It came about in this fashion. It was towards the end of March, and flock after flock of wild geese were winging their way back to the north of the country for the coming spring and snmmer. Flock after flock went past, crying: "We are off to the fjells! we are off to the fjells!" And when they saw the tame geese in the farmyards,

[1] There is a condensed version of the book in English.

they always added: "Come along with us! come along with us! We are off to the fjells! we are off to the fjells!" But all the tame geese replied only: "We are well off here! we are well off here." All of them, that is, except one big wistful young gander in the Holgerssons' farmyard, who became more and more restless and who at last said to himself: "If one more flock comes, I shall join them." One more flock came; he tried to fly up, and cried out: "Wait for me! wait for me. I am coming! I am coming." But he had never flown before, and he sank to the ground panting. Nils was watching, and, being afraid that the fine young gander would succeed next time in the attempted flight, he jumped on the bird's back to hold him down. But the boy forgot that he was now a mere hop-o'-my-thumb and no weight at all. The gander at this moment made a second and more vigorous effort to fly, acquired suddenly the use of his wings, and in a moment he and his feather-weight rider were up aloft, following in the wake of a flock of wild geese whose leader was the most eminent and most venerable goose in the whole of Sweden, old Akka of Kebnekeise. And Kebnekeise, the highest of all the high mountains in the uttermost north of Sweden, was to be their destination.

But old Akka is in no hurry to get there. Spring will not reach those regions for another month or two, and meanwhile Skåne and Halland and Blekinge and Småland, with their milder climates, are more to the taste of her and her companions; so from his gander's back little Nils is given a succession of bird's-eye views of these southern provinces—of his own province, Skåne, first of all. He had no notion of what it would look like, seen thus from the sky.

"Wherever can we be?" he asks the young gander, as he glances down from its back and sees below him what looks like an immense tablecloth divided up into an infinity of rectangular patches, some square-shaped, some long and narrow, some very large, some quite small. "What in the world can it be, this great thing all cut up into squares?"

"Just meadows and fields," cried the wild geese, hearing his question—"just meadows and fields."

And he realized that the great thing all cut up into squares was the wide plain of Skåne. He began to make out first the squares of tender green—these were the barley-fields sown last autumn. The squares of greyish-yellow were the fields in which corn had grown last summer; the squares of reddish-brown were the clover fields; the squares of black were the fields given over to sugar-beet or else the fields lying fallow. The brown squares with a bordering of yellow were the ash groves, for the old trees in the middle of these groves went bare in the winter, while the young trees on the outskirts kept their yellowing leaves until the spring. Then there were squares which looked on a lower level, with something grey in their middle—those must be the big farmyards closed in by buildings with thatched roofs; and there were dark green squares, with a framework of brown—those were the gardens in which the shrubs already revealed their verdure, while the hedges outside still remained leafless.

Nils laughed out loud as, one by one, he recognized all the familiar scenes in this unfamiliar setting.

But the geese were a little shocked at his frivolity. "A good and fertile soil," they cried reprovingly—"a good and fertile soil."

And so Selma Lagerlöf takes Nils and her hundreds

of thousands of little compatriots flying here and there over the whole of their country, giving them glimpses of some of Sweden's most characteristic and historic sights and scenes and introducing incidentally a variety of its bipeds and quadrupeds, some friendly, some unfriendly, conspicuous among them a fox named Smirre and a stork named Mr. Ermenrich, just back from wintering in Pomerania. At one moment old Akka and her companions are making for Kullaberg, a mountainous promontory to the extreme north-west of Skåne, near Mölle, the bathing-place, and near Höganäs, famous for its delightful pottery; at the next they have sped south to Karlskrona, the naval station on the Baltic, on the coast of Blekinge. Nils was startled by his first peep at Karlskrona. It was night-time, and what he seemed to see was a huge, angry giant raising aloft his arms and surrounded by monstrous whales and sharks about to attack him and tear him to pieces. But Akka and her flock were quite at their ease, and when he at last perceived that the giant was just a great rocky island with two church towers rising from its summit, and that the whales and sharks were cruisers and gunboats, he became ashamed of his alarms.

Presently Nils is taken for a midnight flight on the back of Mr. Ermenrich, the stork, with whom he is now on terms of close companionship. A very memorable flight this—a flight to a dreamland—for the geese and Mr. Ermenrich himself all assure him afterwards that he must have been dreaming: a dreamland in which he sees a most marvellous city.

The first he saw of it was a massive, crenelated wall with a great gate in it flanked by two towers. Looking to right and left, he saw that the wall extended far in

both directions and that it was adorned with many towers and turrets. The great gate opened, and he entered, and behold, within its spacious archways, some men on guard, richly and picturesquely dressed, playing at dice, each of them with a battle-axe by his side. They were so absorbed in their game that they did not even look up as he passed through.

Now he found himself in a great open square, paved with great paving-stones. All around it stood lofty gabled houses, and from it in different directions radiated long, narrow streets. The great square was alive with people. The men wore long cloaks lined with fur, above flowing robes of silk, and on their heads, at a rakish angle, caps adorned with plumes; on their breasts hung heavy chains of gold. They all looked to him like kings. The women's head-dresses were immensely high and went to a point; they wore long trains and narrow sleeves. Beautifully attired they were, but less magnificently than the men. They all seemed somehow to have come out of an old book with coloured pictures in it which his mother used to take out of that big oak-chest of hers to show him. He could not believe his eyes.

The town itself was more amazing even than its inhabitants. On the fronts of the houses were all kinds of wonderful carvings and decorations—among them statues of Christ and the Virgin and groups of the apostles. The streets, although so narrow, were not mournful or depressing like the city streets he was accustomed to; people were coming and going all the time, and elderly women sat knitting in the doorways. The shop-fronts were all open and jutted out into the streets—it was like being at a fair. And everyone seemed to do his work out of doors—tanners, black-

smiths, goldsmiths, cobblers. Cloth-merchants had their wares spread out in front of them—rich silks and velvets and embroideries of every kind. Nils found himself running—he was so anxious to see as much as possible before it all disappeared.

Turning back at the end of the street (where he came again upon the great city wall with its guards, all helmeted and wearing splendid accoutrements), he made his way to the very centre of the city—another great open square—above which rose a cathedral with three tall towers and a massive portico decorated with statues. Opposite it was another splendid edifice with a lofty spire—evidently the Town Hall. The houses on either side of the square were exquisitely decorated.

When Nils woke up, or at least when he found himself back on the spot from which he had started on that flight, and when he recounted his experiences, Mr. Ermenrich, while declaring he thought it was all a dream, admitted that according to a legend there had once been such a city not far from where they were—a city named Vineta, whose inhabitants had become so purse-proud and arrogant that they and it, for punishment, had been swallowed up and submerged by the sea.

Two days later Akka, having noted how preoccupied and perturbed Nils still was over his vision, took her flock over to Gotland so that he might see, in the Visby of to-day, a city which once had looked like the legendary Vineta, though now bereft of all its wealth and glory. But little Nils found no consolation in the sight. On the contrary, the ruins of the old churches, the gaps in the walls, the dismantled towers and turrets, the gates with no men in armour to guard them, the great empty squares, the ivy covering the once decorated walls, the

grass growing in the streets—all depressed and saddened him. He no longer mourned, however, that sudden swallowing up of his dream-city. Better, he felt, that it should have perished so than that it should, like Visby, have fallen into dilapidation and decay.

After this visit to Visby, Akka of Kebnekeise had intended to dally for awhile in Småland before speeding up north, but when, on the 12th of April (the reader does well to note all Selma Lagerlöf's dates, for there is nothing haphazard about them), when already, on the 12th of April, reaching a spot in the district of Tjust, south of the big industrial town of Norrköping, she found the whole countryside sprinkled with anemones and other wildflowers, she decided that the spring had come along so speedily that there was no time for further loitering in the south—they must continue their flight.

Nils was disappointed. A son of Skåne, he had long wished to have a look at its neighbour and rival, Småland. The previous summer he had been employed by a neighbouring farmer to mind some geese, and almost every day he had met two little Smålanders who were similarly engaged—a sister and brother named Asa and Mats. Asa was a nice, polite little girl, but Mats was rude and impudent. "Did you ever hear how Småland and Skåne were created?" he once asked Nils. "No," said Nils; and little Mats proceeded to narrate to him the Saga of Småland.

It was at the time when God Almighty was making Sweden. While he was at it, St. Peter happened to pass by. He stopped to look on, and asked if it was a difficult job.

"Not too easy," replied God Almighty.

St. Peter tarried a little to watch, and then, seeing

how deftly the Almighty did his work, he thought he'd like to try his hand at it.

"Perhaps you'd like to have a bit of a rest?" he remarked at last. "I could carry on for awhile."

But God Almighty refused.

"I'm afraid," he said, "you aren't quite up to this."

St. Peter was annoyed, and he declared that he was just as well able to create a country as God Almighty himself.

Now God Almighty was just then busy on Småland. He had only made about half of it, but they were the best bits, mostly up north, and it was going, evidently, to be a very fine and fertile region. He thought he could afford to put Peter to the test. After all, no one could make a mess of a task so well begun. So he said:

"Good! we'll see which of us two knows best how to do this kind of thing. You are a beginner, so you can finish off Småland while I get on another province."

St. Peter agreed, and they separated.

God Almighty then went down south and set to work creating Skåne. He was very quick over it, and, when he had finished, he asked St. Peter how *he* was getting on, and invited him to come and see the new province.

"Oh, I've finished long ago," said St. Peter, and the tones of his voice revealed how pleased with himself he was. And even when he saw Skåne, with its great fertile plains and its gentle little hills, he was not discomfited. "Yes, it's a fine province," he admitted, "but I believe mine is finer still."

"Well, let's go and see," said God Almighty.

Now, when St. Peter had taken it on, all the north and east of Småland were already finished, so the west

and south were what he had to create. When they got there, God Almighty pulled up short, horrified and disgusted.

"Whatever have you been up to, St. Peter?" he exclaimed.

St. Peter had begun to look foolish. He had told himself that there was nothing a region needed so much as warmth, so he had got together all the rocks and stones he could and had piled them together in such a fashion as to make a high plateau—as high as ever possible—so that it might get all the sunshine it could. On top of it he had spread a thin layer of soil, and this, he flattered himself, made it perfect.

Now, while they had been in Skåne, there had been some pretty strong gales blowing, and this had put poor St. Peter's handicraft to a severe test. The whole of that thin layer of soil had been swept away and the rocks and stones showed through everywhere. Even in the very best spots nothing could grow but firs and junipers and moss and heath. There was certainly no lack of water. The crevices were full of it, and there were any number of rivers and rivulets and lakes and ponds, to say nothing of swamps and marshes. But all this moisture was distributed unequally. Some sections had too much, others had none at all, and you saw great expanses of barren land from which the sand and the dust went up in eddying whirls at the slightest breath of wind.

"Whatever can have possessed you to create such a region?" asked God Almighty scornfully.

St. Peter explained his notion about the heat of the sun.

"Well, but it all lies exposed to the cold as well as to the heat," replied God Almighty. "I'm greatly

afraid that nothing will grow here owing to the frosts, and that the people will be frozen too. It's a bad look-out, and I'm afraid there's nothing to be done now."

But St. Peter tried to put a good face upon the matter, and he even sought to console God Almighty.

"Don't take it to heart so much," he said. "Wait until I have time to create a race capable of cultivating the marshlands and of reclaiming the wastes."

God Almighty lost all patience at this.

"No, no!" he exclaimed. "You get back to Skåne and create the Skånians. I'll create the Smålanders myself."

And God Almighty made the Smålander lively, keen, gay, industrious, and capable and contented with the scanty subsistence which he is able to extract from his soil.

So ended the Saga of Småland as told by little Mats. Nils unwisely asked him, when he had finished telling it, how St. Peter had succeeded in creating the Skånians. To which little Mats replied impudently: "What do you think yourself?" Whereupon Nils hit little Mats, who, supported by his little sister, hit Nils back and vanquished him.

Is Selma Lagerlöf on the side of Asa and little Mats? The Smålanders say she is, and so it would certainly seem, but this is a point upon which her readers disagree.

The pre-occupation of the Swedes with children, as exemplified in this book of Selma Lagerlöf's and in a "Children's Paradise" which was a very conspicuous feature of the Gothenburg International Exhibition of 1923, has called forth a curious and interesting comment from a sympathetic French observer, M. Robert de

Traz.[1] After describing very prettily that so-called "Paradise", with its eight-year-old Grenadiers on guard in their tiny sentry-boxes, its Lilliputian restaurant, its juvenile zoological gardens inhabited by frolicsome kids and tame rabbits and dwarf ponies and a diving seal only just out of infancy, M. de Traz remarks that it was thoroughly characteristic of the Swedes thus to concentrate on the amusing of child-visitors to the Exhibition instead of seeking to concoct sophisticated or vulgar or vicious distractions for the adult public. And, pondering on the Swedish types that he himself has met (types belonging mostly, one imagines, to his own world of art and music and books), M. de Traz proceeds to say that, with the freshness of all their sensations, the spontaneity of their laughter, their lack of logic, and their romantic imaginations, they have seemed to him more like grown-up children than serious persons of mature age. It is not without significance, he declares, that Nils Holgersson should have become one of the national heroes of Sweden.

[1] "Dépaysements", in the "Cahiers Verts" series.

CHAPTER VI

A WALK ROUND STOCKHOLM

"DEAR dirty Dublin", *La Ville Lumière,* "The Venice of the North"—there is no escaping these familiar labels, but one is quite grateful to anybody ingenious enough to suggest an alternative to any of them. A contributor to the popular Swedish illustrated paper, the "Vecko-Journal", has made recently a gallant effort to invent a new label for Stockholm: it should be called the "Florence of the North", he contends, rather than the "Venice." Stockholm, he declares—yes even now, when its splendid new Town Hall, or *Stadshus,* does undeniably set one thinking of Venice—has far more in common with Florence. The Stockholm of to-day, he urges, is in its essence a city of merchant princes, a city of great municipal enterprises and palatial business offices and banks, with its Medici-like Thiels and Wallenbergs pouring out their wealth munificently upon the arts. . . . It would not do to push the comparison too far, and, of course, the columns of a weekly journal did not afford space for much amplification, but it was a comparison worth suggesting. The Stockholm of to-day, although the King's historic palace and the semi-Venetian *Stadshus* stand out in it so conspicuously, is not to be thought of primarily either as a royal capital or as a beautiful city emerging from the sea. It is, above all,

a thriving, bustling, democratic place—the creation, like mediæval Florence, of its own energetic, successful and public-spirited citizens.

One of the respects in which Stockholm must, however, be admitted still to resemble Venice rather than Florence is the ease with which you lose yourself in it just at first. The geography of Florence is very simple—although, indeed, as I write this sentence, I recall a little American lady who did not find it so, and who every time she revisited the town astonished herself with new discoveries. "Hullo!" she exclaimed once, as she looked up at Giotto's Tower—"hullo! I guess that's new since I was here last." But she was an exception. Most visitors find their way about Florence quite easily, while in Venice one is apt to be bewildered. Stockholm, also, for the first day or two at least, is quite bewildering. I shall probably fail, but I shall at least try to enable you to get your bearings from the very start.

It has to be noted, to begin with, that Lake Mälar, upon whose shore rises the *Stadshus*, narrows at this, its eastern extremity, into a swiftly-flowing stream, the *Norrström*, which divides the Stockholm of to-day from the Stockholm of yesterday and the day before. Immediately to the south of this *Norrström* you see the fan-shaped island called *Staden*—"The City"—the western end of which, cut off from it by a narrow canal, is called *Riddarholmen*—"The Island of the Knights". Farther south, connected with *Staden* by a bridge, lies the extensive quarter of *Södermalm*, for the most part a residential district, old in the main, but with a good many new sections in it. There are lofty points in *Södermalm*, notably a cliff-like terrace, whence you have lovely views of the entire city—

loveliest at night and in the winter when it is enveloped in snow and all its glistening waterways are frozen. You are taken up to these heights by the great iron lifts, known as Maria-Hissen and Katerina-Hissen, called after two very conspicuous churches, dedicated respectively to the Blessed Virgin and to the Swedish St. Catherine, the latter a handsome seventeenth-century structure. In other respects, although you come occasionally on charming old-world houses in it, Södermalm presents little of general interest. Foreign visitors seldom explore it—seldom even enter it except to take the train for Saltsjöbaden and other pleasure-resorts out eastwards towards the Baltic; while in the eyes of the average Stockholm resident it possesses only one other outstanding feature, a frankly vulgar music-hall named Mosebacke.

The full name of *Staden* is *Staden inom Broarna*, "The City within the Bridges". Most of its north-eastern end is occupied by the Royal Palace, an immense edifice, in Italian Renaissance style, designed by Nicodemus Tessin, the younger, Scandinavia's Christopher Wren as he has been called, whom Louis XIV once invited to prepare plans for a new Louvre. The wars of Charles XII delayed the construction of the palace. It was completed in 1760 by Tessin's son. A majestic building, magnificently situated, it must be one of the finest royal residences in the whole world. In addition it is quite a treasure-house of the arts. Among other priceless objects which it contains are the Gobelins tapestries that Gustavus III, an ardent collector, brought home from France—there is no such splendid collection of Gobelins in the France of to-day. Close to the Palace is the *Storkyrka*—"Great Church"—some portions of which date back to Birger

A REGATTA ON LAKE MÄLAR
IN THE CENTRE, STOCKHOLM'S FAMOUS NEW TOWN HALL

Jarl, Stockholm's thirteenth-century founder (of whom more presently). Along the whole of the eastern side of the island there runs a spacious granite wharf, to which quite large vessels can be moored. *Riddarholmen*, the western end already mentioned, possesses in *Riddarhuset* ("The House of the Knights") one of Stockholm's architectural gems, an exquisite seventeenth-century structure designed by Simon de la Valle for Queen Christina; here also is another of its oldest churches, Riddarholmskyrkan, consecrated at the end of the thirteenth century. This church is Sweden's Pantheon in some measure.

North of *Staden*, and in the midst of the *Norrström*, is the much smaller island called *Helgeandsholmen*—"The Island of the Holy Ghost"—connected with it by two bridges, one of which, *Norrbro*, is continued over the *Norrström* to the principal open square of modern Stockholm, Gustav-Adolfs-Torg. From the *Staden* end of this handsome bridge, if you stand with your back to the Royal Palace, you see some of the most noteworthy edifices of the town—on your left the new Parliament House, *Riksdagshuset*, the façade of which is condemned as tawdry and unworthy of such a site, with, to its rear, the National Bank of Sweden; immediately in front of you, on the west side of Gustav-Adolfs-Torg, is the Foreign Office, a dignified old building but without beauty, faced on the east side by the Opera House, about which the less said the better; to your right, on a straggling promontory, are the Grand Hotel and the National Museum.

Gustav-Adolfs-Torg is the heart of the Stockholm of to-day—the Stockholm in which, if you are a normal person, you will spend most of your time. Northwards from it extends *Regerings Gatan*—"Government Street";

if instead of taking it, you go to your right, passing the Opera House and the famous restaurant attached to it, *Operakällaren*, you find yourself at the southern end of *Kungsträdsgården*—"The King's Gardens"—noteworthy for the handsome new buildings which flank it on the east, Wallenberg's bank and the Svenska Handels Bank among them. Keeping on, you come in a few minutes to the point where two other important thoroughfares meet, *Birger Jarls Gatan* and *Strandvägen*, in front of the city's most imposing play-house, the New Dramatic Theatre, as it is called. *Strandvägen*, which takes us to the city's easternmost point, has on its left a long row of luxurious mansions, interspersed with a few opulent shops; on its right is a busy quay. Some people prefer to compare Stockholm with Edinburgh rather than with Venice. If we are to think of it as a Northern European Edinburgh, then, it has its Princes Street in *Strandvägen*, for not only is it a splendid promenade, but its situation lays it open to an unanswerable criticism by which Princes Street was once devastated. "Don't you admire even Princes Street?" was the inquiry—so the story goes—addressed to a little London servant-girl by her Edinburgh employers, who had felt piqued by her blindness to the beauties of the Scottish capital. "Princes Street," she replied, with a contemptuous sniff, "why, it's only got one side."

Strandvägen is perhaps the most characteristic street in all modern Stockholm. Everything about it is typical of the life of the town; it has, in particular, a typical restaurant, *Gyllene Hornet*—"The Golden Horn"—and a still more typical *konditori*, that of Landelius, where at any hour from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., and again in the evening, when there is an orchestra,

A CENTRAL POINT IN STOCKHOLM

IN THE FOREGROUND, STATUE OF CHARLES XII. BEYOND, THE ROYAL PALACE

you may see people of fashion and rank—and, indeed, a great many people, men as well as women, with no such pretensions—consuming perfect coffee and not less perfect cakes. By the way, here we have another link between Stockholm and Florence, for experts will tell you that if you want, anywhere in Europe, to taste cakes as good as those provided by Landelius, you must go to a certain delightful tea-shop in the Via Tornabuoni.

On Sundays and fête-days *Strandvägen* is thronged with pedestrians, and there is an endless procession along it of crowded tramcars and automobiles, for besides being the most attractive walk of the town, it is the highway to Stockholm's favourite pleasure-resorts, *Skansen*, *Djurgården* and *Hasselbacken*. *Hasselbacken* is to Stockholm a little of what Richmond used to be to London in Star-and-Garter days, but apart from its semi-rural surroundings and its sumptuous restaurant, it also boasts a first-rate circus. *Djurgården* —literally "The Wild Animals' Garden"—is not a "Zoo", but a sort of insular Bois de Boulogne. *Skansen* is at once a "Zoo" and an open-air museum and a recreation-ground. A watch-tower once stood on the summit of the hill-side which *Skansen* now occupies —hence its name, which means "The Fortress". It is a kind of complement to a splendidly arranged "Northern Museum", which it adjoins and in combiation with which it illustrates almost every aspect of Swedish national life, past and present. Both institutions are due to the resourcefulness and enthusiasm of the Swedish antiquarian, Dr. Hazelius. *Skansen* may be described as a hill-side garden of some seventy acres, fashioned into an epitome of the rural districts of Sweden, with reconstructions of every variety of

building to be seen in them, with old wooden churches and bell-towers to farm-houses and barns and mills; as well as with countless specimens of its flora and fauna set in surroundings as natural as possible. On days of festival *Skansen* is a scene of much gaiety and animation, with its music and dancing and its wealth of rich-hued national costumes. *Djurgården* is the name of the entire island (about two miles in length and three-quarters of a mile in breadth) within which *Skansen* is enclosed. It is a really beautiful park, laid out by Gustavus III, with charming drives and walks, and it is studded with delightful villas.

We came to *Djurgården* over a bridge from the eastern end of *Strandvägen.* Recrossing that bridge, we may go first to the right to have a look at the British Legation, a pleasant and unpretentious villa, situated near the English church in what is really a new suburb of Stockholm, and then, having retraced our steps, proceed in a north-easterly direction along the boulevard-like *Narvavägen*, to *Valhallavägen*, also like a boulevard, with which it forms a right angle and which may be considered provisionally, although much new building is in progress beyond it, as the northern boundary of this residential quarter of the town, by name *Östermalm.*

The outstanding feature of *Valhallavägen* is now the Stadium, the immense oblong sports-ground, with seats for 25,000 spectators, which was erected in 1912 and in which the Olympic games took place in the summer of that year. It is encircled by a handsome brick wall, with a semi-mediæval look about it, and with two stately towers. There is something truly splendid about this Stadium, alike in the conception and execution. It is eloquent of the serious and ambitious

spirit in which young Sweden has taken up sport. It is not a sports-ground, merely, however, but is utilized also for spectacular public festivals such as that held annually on *Barnens Dag*—" Children's Day ". " Children's Day ", celebrated on a Sunday about the middle of September, is perhaps the most striking, as it is certainly the most popular, of all the festivals held in Stockholm. The proceeds and from a big lottery associated with it and from the gate-money go towards the support of a most admirable charity, a children's summer home upon an island—*Barnens Ö*, " Children's Island "—in the archipelago between the capital and the Baltic. When the weather is favourable, as it was last year, the Stadium presents a wonderful spectacle on that Sunday evening. It is an impressive, rather than an exhilarating, spectacle. The music, indeed, exhilarates, for there are magnificent massed bands, and the Upsala male choir—one of the peculiar prides of Sweden—takes foremost part in the proceedings. But in the national dances and the display of national costumes and the torchlight procession with which the whole performance culminates, there is almost no sign of anything like gaiety or high spirits. At the very end—perhaps as a concession to the youngest spectators —there is a display of fireworks, but they seem an irrelevance. The festival, taken as a whole, is almost religious in its solemnity.

In *Östermalm*, the eastern division of Stockholm, there were no very outstanding " sights ", no exceptionally remarkable buildings to arrest our attention. In *Norrmalm*, the central section *Valhallavägen* brings us back, and in the northern outskirts of the town what strikes one most is the prominence of the schools. The Swedish Government is wisely lavish in its expenditure

upon education, and the genius of Swedish architects has been admirably inspired in such edifices as the New Academy of Science and the Natural History Museum. Architectural skill and fancy have been given ample scope also by many go-ahead commercial firms. The offices of the Johnson Steamship Line in *Birger Jarls Gatan*, for instance, are marked by a really refreshing boldness.

The upper regions of *Norrmalm* are not much frequented by foreign visitors, most of whom are familiar only with the chief streets which intersect the district, *Kungs Gatan* and *Hamn Gatan*, running east and west, and *Regerings Gatan*, already mentioned, and *Drottning Gatan*—"Queen Street"—parallel with it (Stockholm's Bond Street, it may be called), running north and south; to these should, perhaps, be added *Vasa Gatan*, a wide thoroughfare to its extreme west, into which one emerges from the chief railway station on one's arrival. Of all these five streets only one contains anything sensational in the way of architecture, namely *Kungs Gatan*, which since 1924 has given birth to twin sky-scrapers—the first of their New World type to be seen as yet anywhere in the Old World. Eighteen-story, quadrangular, by no means inelegant buildings they are, looking at a distance like immensely tall towers.

Beyond *Vasa Gatan* and the main station lies that third division of Stockholm, *Kungsholmen*, of which Östberg's Town Hall is now the crowning glory, but which boasts one other noble structure in Westman's Law Courts—*Rådhuset*. A well-known Swedish critic has written very interestingly about Westman and Östberg apropos of these two creations of theirs. He calls Westman "a Swedish Lutyens, serious, compact

in his general effects, and Östberg a Swedish Lethaby, a less prolific artist, but of a finer type and of a richer fantasy", but he adds that these resemblances are "but partial, for the two Swedes in question have points in common also with the English Romantics such as Baillie Scott". Both Westman and Östberg came to the front, he says, "after that severance with Norway which brought our long period of internal discussions to a close. Their immediate predecessors had, indeed, displayed a slight, so to speak, Platonic regard for the national features in the older Swedish style of architecture. Clason [1] had his French training and Boberg an American strain or tendency in him, which comprised among other things a taste for Oriental decoration; and they both showed a gradually increasing sense for Swedish features in the details of masonry. But with Westman and Östberg there came in a deeper study of everything that was involved in Swedish tradition, and this was to be recognized not merely in certain distinctive forms in towers, in panelling and in a predilection for ornamental motives borrowed from Swedish scenery, but, above all, in the peculiar construction of the buildings themselves and in the shape and proportions of the rooms and in the use of the building materials. They both revealed a special affection for the early Vasa style, which includes both Gothic and Renaissance elements." Both Westman's Law Courts and Östberg's Town Hall, he proceeds to say, "are impressive examples of the old Swedish qualities, simple and monumental. With Westman

[1] The writer has previously described Herr I. G. Clason as the Norman Shaw of Sweden. The article cited appears in "The Swedish Year Book" for 1925, on sale at the Swedish Travel Bureau, Coventry Street and Haymarket.

this national type has taken on a severer, barer form, and with Östberg it has developed into a certain 'magnificence', a grand manner, in which, in a veritably Swedish way, the North is made to blend with the South".

Östberg's Town Hall is, indeed, magnificent. As I said on the first page of this chapter, you cannot look at the *Stadshus* without thinking of Venice. It might almost have been designed deliberately as a Northern European pendant to the Doge's Palace and the Campanile of St. Mark's. Its lofty, square-shaped bell-tower, more massive than the Campanile, is severely simple save for the symbolic "Three Crowns" of Sweden, resplendent in gold, raised high above its summit. The Town Hall is constructed in the main of bricks of a curiously rich red. It is the façade overlooking Lake Mälar that recalls the Palace of the Doges. This façade rests on a row of stately columns of granite. Between it and the water extends an exquisitely arranged terrace, two hundred yards in length, laid out in squares of lawn with pathways of irregularly cut granite slabs in between. I shall not attempt to describe the rest of the building. Suffice it to say that no Town Hall in Europe, even in mediæval days, can ever have had more thought and skill and ingenuity devoted to its planning out in every detail. Sweden has many architectural beauties, old and new, but in this new edifice she has surpassed herself. It is a masterpiece.

CHAPTER VII

MY STOCKHOLM DAY

MY few months in the Swedish capital have been spent in the style rather of a lifelong resident than of a stranger from afar. I have never stayed in any of its hotels and I have left quite a number of its sights unvisited: our walk round Stockholm has almost exhausted my capabilities as a guide.

During my first visit to Stockholm in 1912 I stayed in a big house in *Valhallavägen*, where a very comfortable bed-sitting-room had been found for me in the flat of a nice old lady, half-Swedish, half-Swiss. What impressed me most, I think, about the house was the automatic lift—a convenience to be found in almost all modern buildings in Sweden already then, although still a rarity with us. They are "fool-proof" lifts—even young children can use them. Another excellent contrivance was connected with the electric light. You pressed a button in the hall and your way was illuminated for the next three minutes. If that was not enough, you could press another button on your own landing. The month was March; the whole city was under snow, and the weather was bitterly cold, but the porcelain stoves and the double windows kept one pleasantly warm indoors. Swedes, accustomed all their lives to these things, suffer more than we do

from our winter when they come to England. There was no bath-room, which seemed strange in a modern building otherwise so admirably equipped. But that, I found, was an index to Swedish ways. The Swedes, as I have remarked already, are conspicuous for their cleanliness, but, generally speaking, until quite recently they have had no bath-rooms in their homes.[1] They have been accustomed to resort regularly instead to public baths, where there are professional and highly expert bath-women to wash and scrub them. The English male visitor is incredulous when he is told that he is to be thus dealt with, and he is apt to be not a little embarrassed and alarmed when a female of perhaps his own age—they are of any age from forty to sixty—appears and begins operations. While proceeding to his compartment, he has seen a number of them about, but he has undressed in private and got unmolested into the bath. Before he has been in the water a minute, however, the bath-woman is at him, and, willy-nilly, he has to submit. There is no doubt about it, you get the washing and scrubbing of a lifetime, and as the operators are not chosen for their looks or their wiles, the normal man is not unduly disturbed—not, that is, after the first blush!—and he returns to his everyday existence feeling cleaner than he has ever felt before.

My second experience of Stockholm was in the autumn of 1919. I stayed in a *dublett* (a bachelor's three-room flat) in *Jakobs Gatan*, lent me by a Swedish friend, a charming fellow, a young official in the service

[1] In the big new blocks of flats erected during the last ten years in Stockholm and elsewhere bath-rooms have been introduced, and, of course, in the more luxurious private houses.

of the State department which controls the forests of Sweden. He had had his education at the only Swedish boys' school conducted on the lines of our Eton or Harrow or Winchester, Lundsberg School, in Värmland, to which the Crown Prince has sent three of his sons.

My next abode, later in the same year, was in *Narvavägen*, a bed-sitting-room on the fourth floor, overlooking that very spacious and handsome thoroughfare. I spent three winter months in *Narvavägen*, and it is largely from this period that I shall take my specimen Stockholm day—it will be a composite portrait of many days.

Called at 7.30 by my English landlady, the widow of a Swedish wine-merchant. Breakfast at eight, or perhaps only an early cup of tea, and then my fast broken with a vengeance at the house of some hospitable Swede. The Swedish breakfast you are asked out to is likely to have only one fault—superabundance. Who was it exclaimed: "Fate cannot harm me, I have dined to-day"? I forget, but I am sure it was not a Swede. A Swede would defy Fate after his *frukost*.

Frukost over, whether at home or out, I would frequently make my way to the Royal Library in Stockholm's little central park, *Humlegården*, which means "Hop Gardens", but, like the Hay in our Haymarket, the Hops are of yesterday. Here, in a large, well-lit, very well-arranged, oblong room one can read very comfortably. There is no lack of English books or periodicals, if you require them, and you soon master enough of Swedish to make known your requirements and have them satisfied.

In the Exhibition Hall (*Visnings-Sal*) among other

priceless objects you may see a Latin rendering of the Gospels in gold letters on red and white parchment, written by Irish monks about A.D. 600—*Codex Aureus*, it is called. Baedeker tells you about the rest.

From the Library I would betake myself to one or other of my favourite restaurants for lunch.

I am surprised, now that I come to think of it, that I did not look up the name "Newnham-Davis, Nathaniel," in the Library catalogue in order to compare gastronomical notes with that once-famous commentator on *la Haute Cuisine*; one came across more unlikely entries in it than "The Gourmet's Guide to Europe", and, although my purse was very light and I am no epicure, it would have amused me to follow the eupeptic colonel's movements in Stockholm and to see what he thought about Swedish cookery. Looking at his little book now, I find that he is rather condescending towards Sweden. He considered most of the Swedish dishes "very simple", and he attributed their simple nature to the fact that the materials at the disposal of the Swedish *chef* were limited. But this was in 1908. In 1925 a daily supply of fresh fish began to come to Stockholm from Gothenburg every morning by aeroplane, and soon the Swedish capital may be able to obtain by air-transport every ingredient that the most exacting *chef* could desire.

The restaurants to which Colonel Newnham-Davis went were the *Operakällaren*, where at that time one could lunch at the astonishingly low price of 1.50 kronor (about one and eightpence) and dine for 2.50 or 3.50; the Grand Hotel, a little more expensive; the Continental, where it interested him to taste the *Nässelkålsoppa*, a soup with nettles in it; the Café du Nord, very clean but very crowded, largely frequented

by business men; *Berns Salonger*, a sort of Swedish Gatti's, the building which contained "The Red Room", immortalized in Strindberg's novel; *Strömparterren*, popular in summer; Blanche's, which boasted a military band; and *Hasselbacken*, which I have mentioned in Chapter VI.

All these restaurants still thrive. Every visitor to Stockholm should visit at least the first three named [1] and, in addition, two other excellent places of more recent origin, the *Rosenbad* and "The Blue Door" —*Blå Porten*. The *Rosenbad* is very centrally situated in *Ström Gatan*, and with a good view of the *Norrström*. *Blå Porten* adjoins *Liljevalchs*, an attractive art gallery in *Djurgården*, on the way to *Hasselbacken*. The *Rosenbad* rooms look a trifle plain compared with those of *Operakällaren*, the walls of which are adorned with richly-coloured pictorial designs, but as regards comfort and company and *cuisine*, there is not much to choose between the two establishments, and both are remarkably cheap compared with their London equivalents, the Carlton, the Savoy and the Ritz.

But during my Stockholm sojourns it was seldom to such places as these that I would wend my way from the Library. Usually I chose either a small and secluded little café in *Norrmalms Gatan*, called *Konstnärernas buffet* (*Konstnärernas*, a difficult word to pronounce, means Artists') or a *brasserie* in *Birger Jarls Gatan*. At the former my most frequent meal consisted of *hors d'œuvres*, a diminutive but perfectly grilled steak and fried potatoes, and delicious rolls and butter, followed by coffee beyond praise, with a

[1] The Grand Hotel's "Royal Restaurant", with its delightful winter gardens, was not in existence in 1908, at the time of Colonel Newnham-Davis's visit.

most generous allowance of cream. The total cost, including a small lager, seldom exceeded half-a-crown. I don't know any restaurant in London where one could get so palatable a repast, so daintily served, for anything like so low a price.[1] At the *brasserie* there was a wider choice of dishes, and here, also, as at almost all Swedish restaurants, the *hors d'œuvres* were so inviting and in such variety that one seldom resisted them. At the *brasserie*, too, there was a greater abundance of newspapers and periodicals at one's disposal, and one could sit and read them as long as one liked. At the "Artists' Buffet", between one o'clock and half-past two, accommodation was relatively scanty, and one could not retain one's table indefinitely.

After lunch, what to do? In the winter, of course, for those so inclined, there was skating or ski-ing or sledging or tobogganing, but the winter sportsman would not have wasted his morning in the Royal Library; he would have been up betimes and out in the open air all day. That is a most enviable mode of existence, but, for one reason or another, it was not mine. My recreations were unathletic—a walk out to *Skansen* or through the *Djurgården*, perhaps, or a saunter round *Staden* and *Riddarholmen*, or a visit to the National Museum.

The pictures in the Museum that pleased me most are a wonderful portrait of Ellen Key ("the wisest woman in the world" an English admirer calls her) and the landscapes which the Swedish artists began to paint about fifty years ago, and of which some

[1] The nearest approach to it is the half-crown lunch at the Bellman Café, the little Swedish club-restaurant founded a year or two ago in Gerrard Street, Soho, by the well-known artist, Mr. Einar Nerman, who has decorated the walls of its rooms delightfully.

charming examples are to be found in an illustrated brochure entitled "Sweden through the Artist's Eye", published in 1911 by the firm of Norstedt. It is still on sale in its English edition, and every visitor to Sweden should secure a copy, for with its wealth of illustrations and the really illuminating letterpress by Mr. Carl G. Laurin it constitutes a sort of key to Swedish character and sentiment. Mr. Laurin himself, as I said in Chapter III, is one of the best-known figures in the world of art and books in Sweden, and especially in Stockholm; he is the author of a score of instructive volumes, copiously and instructively illustrated and admirably produced by the Norstedt firm, dealing mainly with the history of art, but including also studies of France and Holland, essays on racial psychology, etc. Although issued at high prices, these works have had an immense popular success. You see them wherever you go in Sweden. Mr. Laurin discourses delightfully on the work of these Swedish landscapists of his generation—most of them were friends of his, and he has some charming specimens of their work upon his walls. Hear him, for instance, on two interpreters of Småland:

"If one wants to understand Småland properly, one ought to read Albert Engström's recollections from childhood and study his drawings; then one realizes how the world goes in the little red cottages, how warm and cosy it is in the winter, when they mull a pint of brandy and the air is thick with vapour from the damp clothes; or how strengthened in spirit and lifted above the petty worries of everyday life one feels at the revival meeting, with its coffee, Alleluia rejoicings, and more or less brotherly and sisterly love. One of the greatest of modern artists is Herman Norrman. He

has shown us what a glorious thing the forest can be, and he has painted it so that one feels the scent of the *Ledum*, the resin and all the strong, fresh scent, which fill the air on a hot summer's day and which are carried to one's nostrils by a cool breeze from the marsh, with its cotton-grass and mystic plant and insect world. There is a kind of passionate warmth, both physical and psychical, in Norrman's landscapes, where both heaven and forest are ablaze with red. In gazing at these pictures of Norrmans, the heart is filled with a kind of half-defiant bliss."

Another excellent Swedish writer upon pictures is the distinguished dramatist, Herr Tor Hedberg, Director of the new Thiel Art Gallery in Stockholm. I shall let Mr. Hedberg speak of what may be called comprehensively the Post-Cézanne School, as represented —all too lavishly—in the National Museum. Discussing the subject in the course of an article in the "Swedish Supplement" which was published by "The Times" in May, 1923, Mr. Hedberg expressed himself as follows:

"And the modernists! They have been as modern in Sweden as in any other country, and have belonged to all the schools which have grown up and passed away during the last two decades. They commenced as students of the older realistic painters—Richard Bergh, Nordström, Kreuger—with a tendency to expressionism growing year by year more pronounced. Their forerunner was Sager Nelson, one of the greatest geniuses of Swedish art, who died young of consumption after having painted a dozen masterpieces, chiefly portraits, illuminated by an almost fantastic psychological insight. In the paintings of Isaac Grünewald, Leander Engström and others expressionism has arrived at its limits,

whether as a colouristic achievement in fantastic Oriental splendour (as in Grünewald) or in the strong and vehement idealizing of the character and structure of Nature. Side by side with expressionism, cubism has had many followers in Sweden, in the front rank being an artist formerly belonging to the older realistic school, Georg Pauli. Now the younger artists have partly abandoned the expressionistic (and wholly the cubist) school and are following the modern tendencies as we find them expressed in the French art of to-day, a classicism which is yet built on the pictorial principles of Cézanne and with the romantic force of colour of other of the moderns."

Reading between the lines, I take it that Mr. Hedberg dislikes and deplores a good many of these so-called modernist pictures as much as most of us do—most of us, in any case, who have scored our half-century; what our juniors really feel about them it is hard to tell! Personally, I believe that the welcome given to the monstrosities in question will be admitted presently to have been an absurd mistake, and that a large proportion of them will, within a decade or two, be relegated to some suitable subterranean chamber, there to be preserved for scientific scrutiny by art-historians, brain-specialists and psycho-analysts.

Afternoon tea has become an institution in Stockholm, but not to the same extent as in Paris or other European capitals, because so many Swedes still dine, as our forefathers used to dine, about four or five o'clock. There is no guessing at what hour a Swede will be found at dinner; perhaps the likeliest time is between three and seven. This anarchy is apt to be disturbing to the conventionally-minded Briton, who

will sometimes betake himself to what strikes him as a likely restaurant at what he considers a sane man's dinner-hour, only to find, as Newnham-Davis says feelingly, "no *table d'hôte* ready and the cook out for his daily walk".

But there are a good many Swedes, more especially among those who have travelled, who dine at seven-thirty or even eight. These are the afternoon-tea drinkers, and there are enough of them, with the support of foreign visitors, to make the fortune of the *konditorier* most in favour. In some of the *konditorier* there are orchestras, as there are, too, in the cafés to which people resort for cakes and tea (or coffee), not only in the afternoon, but also in the morning. Swedes who dine at some time between three and seven, and who do not need a regular lunch, indulge very often in tea or coffee either in cafés or *konditorier* or at home between twelve and two.

Baedeker does not tell you these things, but it is useful to know them.

After tea, not being a bridge-player (bridge is as popular in Stockholm as in London) and not being a member of any club (there is, as a matter of fact, comparatively little club-life in Sweden), there was no great choice in the matter of occupations for me until dinner-time. As a rule, when I had no work to do, I prowled about the sections of the city which I liked best, especially the old streets round the palace, sometimes proceeding on to *Södermalm* to enjoy the exquisite views therefrom of the whole city, with its myriad lights reflected in the water; or else I went home and read the papers.

About the Swedish daily Press it would be easy and pleasant for me to write a long chapter, but although

my remarks might interest fellow-scribes, they would perhaps weary other people. The two dailies which I preferred were "Svenska Dagbladet", notable among other things for the admirable signed articles which it prints in feuilleton-fashion, like the "Journal des Débats"; and the great (evening) paper of Gothenburg, "Göteborgs Handels-Tidning",[1] which may be called the Swedish "Manchester Guardian." Just as many people prefer the "Manchester Guardian" to "The Times" or any other London paper, so the "Göteborgs Handels-Tidning" is held by its special admirers to take the lead of any of the dailies of the Swedish capital. Both journals—and some of their rivals also—compare very well with ours, but they are printed on inferior material and they have a somewhat untidy appearance. Their pictorial advertisements sprawl over them in an unattractive way, and their photographic illustrations are, not infrequently, atrocious. The English are reputed to be a patient and long-suffering race, but when one looks at the Stockholm and Gothenburg newspapers, one is inclined to declare that these epithets are even more applicable to the Swedes. You sometimes see whole pages covered with dreadful-looking, often almost unintelligible, smudges. It is astonishing, for the proprietors are full of enterprise and efficiency in other directions, and, generally speaking, they do not lack capital. I would like to see them either use better paper and better printing-machines, or else discard photography altogether. Sweden has produced some great pen-and-ink artists, and still boasts at least a dozen or so whose work is bold and strong enough to print on even the

[1] The full title is *Göteborgs Sjöfarts och Handelstidning: Sjöfart*, Shipping; *Handel*, Trade; *Tidning*, Times.

coarsest paper; it would be a matter of only a few months to produce a big new school of draughtsmen capable of dealing promptly and brilliantly with all the needs of the day, after the fashion of our "Daily Graphic" in the nineties. This might *seem* a retrograde step, but would it be so in reality? Pen-and-ink work happens unfortunately just now to be at a discount with our own Press, but it is encouraged and given full scope in some of the most progressive journals in America, notably the "Christian Science Monitor". I beseech the Swedish papers to follow suit!

One field in which the Swedish Press excels is that of political caricature. "Blix" of the "Göteborgs Handels-Tidning", in particular, is a real master of his art.

Dinner-time! Colonel Newnham-Davis would have taken you to one or other of the more luxurious restaurants already mentioned, but if you come with me it will be to some such modest place as *Gyllene Hornet*, in *Strandvägen*, which is pleasant and inexpensive, or to *Källaren Freden*, which is to the Swedes in a certain sense what "The Cheshire Cheese" is to Londoners, for it is a kind of memorial to the man who counts for most in the literary history of Stockholm, the poet Bellman. The tavern, reconstructed in old style under the supervision of Zorn (who bought the house and presented it to the Swedish Academy of Arts), dates back to Bellman's days, and its principal room is the actual wine-cellar which he frequented. What would Bellman think of it to-day? He would vote the place intolerably clean, I imagine, and altogether too neat and trim and respectable for his somewhat ultra-Bohemian tastes. Bellman has been called

THE BELLMAN TAVERN—*KÄLLAREN FREDEN*

the Swedish Anacreon. He had something of Burns about him also. The Scot and the Swede would have been boon-companions and have caroused most convivially together.

Dinner over, what next? If you know Swedish you have the choice of a host of cinemas, half a dozen first-rate theatres, three or four music-hall entertainments, two or three lectures and the Opera.

Two at least of the Stockholm cinemas are beautiful buildings of their kind, and the Swedish films are for the most part admirable, although the pernicious influence of the U.S.A. makes itself felt all too often. The only vulgar Swedish film which I have seen was manifestly devised upon an American model; the best ones have been adaptations from the works of Selma Lagerlöf and other great Swedish writers. On the other hand, Sweden has produced as yet no film comedian of outstanding genius like the one and only Charlie Chaplin, though, now that I come to think of it, she can point to three absolutely priceless clowns in the "Brothers Miehe", who if they could transfer their comicalities from the circus to the cinema might threaten even Charlie Chaplin's ascendancy!

During my Stockholm months my Swedish was not good enough to enable me to enjoy properly the Opera or the music-halls (which, in any case, are not very attractive); the merits of Swedish plays also would have been lost on me. Twice only did I go to the leading playhouse, "Nya Dramatiker Theater", once to see "Hamlet", once to see "A Woman of No Importance", both in Swedish. Oscar Wilde's witticisms seemed to me to fall rather flat, and if his audience enjoyed them, as I believe it did, it was sadly undemonstrative—Oscar would not have wanted to

call it before the curtain. The "Hamlet" I found ineffective, but I did not see Sweden's leading tragic actor, Anders de Waal, in the title-rôle. With him, probably, it would have been very different. Mr. de Waal has a fine presence and, I am told, a fine voice; and he is a man of intellect. From all I have heard of him, I can imagine that he would challenge comparison with any of our own Shakespearian actors, from Irving's time down to to-day. I wish Mr. Henry Ainley would teach Mr. de Waal English, and then play Antony to his Brutus, Othello to his Iago!

The Swedes are extremely hospitable, and, as most of them can talk our language after a fashion, some of them excellently, the English visitor to Stockholm need seldom feel lonely—he has, indeed, but to join the Swedish-British Society (which now has its rooms at No 14, *Vasa Gatan*) in order to make acquaintance with any number of the kindliest new friends. I myself was still more fortunately placed, having by marriage acquired a large and complete set, not of new friends merely, but new relatives, and very lovable ones. Three of these new relatives had homes in or near Stockholm. In the company of a splendid young nephew named Sten-Bertil (now aged eleven), and of half a dozen little nieces, Lillian and Birgitta, Märta and Sysse, Ingaard and Anne-Marie, and their three pairs of parents, and of yet another little niece, or pseudo-niece, with another pair of parents, who are named Aline and Bror—in this most delectable company I could count always on a very happy ending to my Stockholm day.

CHAPTER VIII

SWEDEN'S THREE GREATEST KINGS

THE story of Sweden, someone has declared, is the story of her kings. Whatever amount of truth may lie in that saying, it is certainly the case that no one can feel he knows much about the country unless he knows something about Gustav Vasa, Gustavus Adolphus, and Charles XII. Wherever you go in Sweden you come across traces of these three men.

Visitors to Stockholm are apt to get their first definite impression of Gustav Vasa from the colossal painted statue by Carl Milles which faces the entrance-hall of the Northern Museum. A very impressive and majestic man Carl Milles makes him look—a small child would take him for God Almighty. Here we have the great King as the Swedes like to visualise him towards the close of his life and at the height of his fame—perhaps in 1560, the year of his death. Strindberg, in his play, "Gustavus Vasa", gives us a picture of him at a somewhat earlier period. We see him "lost in thought" by the window of his study in the old castle of Stockholm: "he has on a black dress of Spanish cut, with yellow linings that show in the seams and through a number of slits. Over his shoulders is thrown a short cloak trimmed with sable. His hair is blond, and his tremendous beard, reaching almost to his waist,

is still lighter in colour."[1] He is impressive-looking already, and already revered by the great bulk of his countrymen, but the dramatist lets us see him also as he is seen by less appreciative eyes. To Dacke, an insurgent leader, he is far from being a great hero; on the contrary, he is "that perjurer and breaker of safe-conducts, Eriksson"; while his eldest son, Prince Erik,[2] thinks of him as a conscience-less tyrant, trampling upon all who oppose him. The queer, crack-brained, rebellious son feels a certain reluctant admiration for this masterful sire of his. "Sometimes, you know," he says to a friend, "when I see him coming in his big soft hat and his blue cloak, using his boar-spear in place of a stick, I think he is Odin himself. When he is angry the people say they can hear him from the top story down to the cellars and that the sound of it is like thunder!"

I have never seen "Gustavus Vasa" acted. It is regarded as one of Strindberg's masterpieces and it is said to be really thrilling on the stage. In the translation by Mr. Edwin Björkman most of its power is lost,[3] and in any case it would not mean to any English

[1] From the "Stage Directions" to Act III, "Strindberg's Plays", translated by E. Björkman. Fourth series.

[2] Miss Lind-af-Hageby, dealing with this play in her excellent little book on Strindberg, characterizes Prince Erik, "the King's dissolute and epileptic son, heir to the throne", as a type of the weakling who oscillates between unholy desire and self-disgust, the born pariah in the realm of the mind, whether he be clad in purple or in rags". It is strange to reflect that this unpromising youth was a suitor for the hand of our Queen Elizabeth!

[3] Mr. Björkman is a scholarly Swede, but his translations of Strindberg's plays, published first in the United States, absolutely spoil them for English readers, being full of the most dreadful American locutions. "Who is back of him?" he makes Gustav Vasa exclaim in one piece. Occasionally

reader what it means to the Swedes. Here is Miss Lind-af-Hageby's very effective *résumé* of the first act:

"No period of Swedish history lends itself better to dramatic treatment than that dominated by the first of the Vasas, Gustavus Eriksson, the chosen King of the people, the incarnation of will, of a wholly masculine personality. The King's struggle to quell the rebellious spirit of the freemen of Dalecarlia, the vast inland country north of Stockholm, to whom he owes his throne and his power, is the subject of the play. The wrath of the King pervades the first act with an atmospheric suggestion of fateful horror. . . . The King has marched to Dalecarlia in order to punish the stiff-necked peasants, who think they can make and unmake kings with impunity. When the curtain rises upon the assembled leaders of the peasants, the King is not seen, but his presence is felt. Master Olof [1] has arrived as the emissary of the sovereign; solemn messengers bid the veterans of the soil to remain seated until they are called to appear before the King. There is a sense of suppressed fear in the room; the quiet, slow-thinking men, clad in white sheepskin coats, suspect something, but cannot grasp the un-

he has resort to modern English slang with effects equally deplorable. "I have forgotten every bit of that old tommy-rot," the Queen's mother remarks in reply to some allusion of the King's! And the King is continually alluding to the Queen's mother as "my mother-in-law"! It is amusing to note that Mr. Björkman is enviably self-complacent over his work. He actually maintains in one of his prefaces that Strindberg's plays read better in this kind of vernacular rendering than they could in any translation made by an Englishman.

[1] Olaus Petri, Luther's Swedish disciple, who was chiefly responsible for introducing the Reformation into Sweden.

thinking audacity of the King's plans. One by one they are called out, but no one returns. Then a messenger from the King brings in three blood-stained sheepskin coats and throws them on the table. This is the King's warning to those who remain and who are permitted to live."

In the five acts of the drama, Miss Lind-af-Hageby proceeds to say, Strindberg depicts the human qualities, the living soul, of the King: "A man hot-tempered, hard, strong, with a vein of irresoluteness running through the granite of his will—a man whose strength is blended with the weakness of the child within that never grows up. We see in him the inconsistency of all flesh: the mighty reformer of the Roman Catholic Church who upholds evangelical Lutheranism and yet clings to Catholic habits; the brutal tyrant who has a way of his own of enforcing obedience by bringing his little steel hammer in ominous contact with obstinate heads and who yet remains the kind, fatherly friend of the people; the patriarch who has identified himself with his country before the Lord, who has stood forth as a prophet of patriotism, and who, by growing self-knowledge to separate the personal from impersonal, is at last humiliated by the goodness of others. Threatened by rebels who march towards Stockholm from the south, outwitted by his treacherous allies in Lübeck, the old King trembles at the news that the sturdy men of Dalecarlia are on their way to Stockholm. The retribution of his harsh deeds of suppression is upon him, and he bows his head before the chastisement of God. But the men of Dalecarlia are made of stuff which outlasts a few fallen heads. They have come in their thousands to help their King and their country to put the common enemy to flight.

Engelbrecht, their leader—jolly, true and a trifle tipsy—bursts into the King's palace and proudly offers him the arms and the devotion of the men in sheepskin coats, true representatives of the Swedish spirit."

I shall not attempt to summarize here Gustav Vasa's reign and its effects. Instead I shall borrow a page or two from the "Cambridge Modern History". It is a work you seldom or never come across in Sweden, yet there are thousands of cultured Swedes who, I am certain, would find delight in those learned, well-weighed and admirably comprehensive volumes. These few lines from the beginning of Mr. W. F. Reddaway's chapter on "The Vasa in Sweden and Poland: 1560–1630" [1] will bridge for us the years between the two great Gustavs. Having recalled how in 1521, the first year of Gustav Vasa's reign, Sweden had been a dependency of Denmark, unable to free herself from the political tyranny of Christian II, Denmark's ruthless king, without submitting to the commercial tyranny of Lübeck and the Hanseatic League; and how Gustav Vasa had given her independence, political, commercial and ecclesiastical alike, and with it the strength which was impelling her towards a policy of empire, Mr. Reddaway proceeds:

"The amazing progress which Sweden owed to the founder of the Vasa dynasty was achieved by a policy which was to leave deep marks upon her future. 'Necessity,' Gustavus held, 'breaks law, not merely the law of man, but at times the law of God also.' To him necessity meant the increase of royal power.

[1] "Cambridge Modern History", vol. iv. The volume covers almost the whole of the reign of Gustavus Adolphus, which began in 1611.

Avaricious of power, he set himself to seize it at home and to avoid hazarding it abroad; and in both aims he succeeded.

"After his death, change in the policy of Sweden was inevitable. To maintain a strong monarchy might be possible, but the days of seclusion were numbered. A State which owed everything to the Protestant faith and the Baltic Sea could not remain indifferent while the fortunes of both were in peril. Apart from the Counter-Reformation, the decay of the Teutonic Order, the decline of the Hanseatic League, the awakening of Russia and the expanding ambitions of Denmark were new arguments which must compel Sweden to take action. The methods of Gustavus, moreover, were such as no other king could follow. Himself a promoted noble, he pillaged the Church remorselessly and administered the kingdom like a great domain. Seizing manors by hundreds, he looked to them for a revenue and even for an army, while he laboured with marvellous energy to control the economic life of the whole nation."

The policy, both international and internal, by which Gustav Vasa's two eldest sons, Erik and John, and his grandson Sigismund, King of Poland, brought Sweden to the verge of dissolution (1560–1598), her deliverance by his third son, Charles (1599–1611), and the efforts by which, under Charles and his son, Gustavus Adolphus, she gained organization, empire and the status of a great Power, form the theme of the chapter opened.

Skipping the half-century which followed the death of Gustav Vasa, let us look at Mr. Kellaway's portrait of the hero of the Thirty Years' War. But right here, as the Americans say, I have a grievance against

the "Cambridge Modern History": it considers the reproduction of portraits as quite beneath its dignity. Now, one can understand that the late Lord Acton and his associates would naturally rule out ordinary illustrations—fanciful battle pictures, for instance, and imaginative renderings of famous incidents—but there are two kinds of illustrations which are surely essential to the comfort of any normal reader of such a work, namely portraits and maps. To appreciate the following lines to the full, we should have before us a picture of Gustavus as he looked in 1611, wearing his broad-brimmed hat, his heavy cloak and long jack-boots, not yet bearded, of course, but already a big and formidable figure:

"Thanks to his father and to the century in which he lived, he was already, at the age of seventeen years, well versed in humane learning, administration and war. . . . He had steeped himself in the works of the ancient historians. German was the language of his mother, and Oxenstierna testifies that 'he spoke Latin, Dutch, French and Italian just as if born to them, understood Spanish, English and Scotch, and had also a smattering of Polish and Muscovite'. As a Protestant, he inherited a love of the Bible; as a child of the Renaissance, a taste for music, poesy and eloquence. He had, moreover, served a strict apprenticeship in statecraft. When but nine years of age, he began to attend the sessions of the Råd. At thirteen he heard complaints and received ambassadors. At fifteen he became Duke of Västmanland and practically co-regent with his father. The truce of 1609 between Spain and the Dutch sent a host of *condottieri* to the North, and from them he learned the art of Spinola and Maurice of Nassau. Already he

showed signs of that versatile talent for war which was to ripen into perfect mastery, so that he became equally expert in inventing appliances and organization, in selecting conscripts and pointing cannon, in heading a troop of horse and in planning a campaign. What laurels Sweden had gained in 1611 were of his gathering.

"In form and in feature he was kingly, according to the heroic type which his people reverenced. He could control his hereditary choler better than the hereditary impulse to be foremost in every fight. Only once is it recorded that he played the tyrant. Then —in 1631—a young courtier, Erik Rålamb, insulted him and fled. Gustavus, inexorable for nine months, cashiered the father on the ground that he should have brought up his son better, and confined him to his house until Erik should return to duty. The connection with Margaret Cabelian, who gave birth to Gustaf Gustafsson, of Vasaborg, in May, 1616, was quite unworthy of the lover of Ebba Brahe.[1] Yet these rare stains, not surprising in a Vasa, enhance the glory of his habitual self-mastery."

Dr. Carl Grimberg, the distinguished historian, in his "Svenska Folkets Underbara Öden" (an immensely popular work in ten volumes), tells a story about Gustavus which makes an appropriate pendant to that one example of the King's tyrannical bent given above.

[1] Ebba Brahe was a beautiful girl of high birth and noble character, two years older than himself, whom his mother prevented—or at least dissauded—him from marrying. When one turns from the "Cambridge History" to a copiously illustrated work like Dr. Grimberg's, one is constrained to admit that at all events no portraits are better than portraits that bring disillusionment! It is melancholy to turn from Dr. Grimberg's sympathetic narrative of this romantic love-affair to the accompanying picture of Ebba Brahe in her singularly unattractive old age.

A Scottish colonel named Seaton, in the King's service, had been guilty of some mistake at a parade. Gustavus called him roughly to account; the colonel began to offer excuses and explanations, and soon the altercation became heated, and the King, forgetting himself, gave the colonel a box on the ear. Such an affront in sight of all the troops was, of course, not to be borne. Colonel Seaton sent in his resignation and hastened away the same evening to Danish territory.

Gustavus repented swiftly his loss of self-control, and, taking with him two of his men, followed the colonel hot-haste, overtook him just beyond the frontier, and apologized to him handsomely, offering him satisfaction as man to man. "Here, outside the domains of Sweden," he exclaimed, "Gustav Adolf and Seaton are equal. Here are two pistols or two rapiers! Take your revenge, if you can!" Seaton fell at the King's feet and asked to be allowed to live in his service. Gustavus embraced him, and they rode back together to the Swedish camp, where the King at once informed all present of the reparation he had made for his offence.

Bismarck, in a conversation with one of his intimates, is reported to have reflected on the fact that it is always the great slaughterers of mankind who are most loved and admired. "In Sweden," he went on to say, "there is scarcely a peasant's cottage without a portrait in it of Charles XII, who was a brutal adventurer, and who bestowed no benefits on his country. One would imagine that Gustavus Adolphus would be Sweden's most popular hero, but he is not." [1]

[1] "Erinnerungen an Bismarck", edited by Dr. Erich Marcks, 1915.

A Swede to whom I quoted this remark has commented on it as follows:

"This is how I feel about it. It is true that Gustavus Adolphus was a great statesman and one of the most remarkable leaders that Sweden has produced. Of course he is also, as you know, regarded by some English military writers as the real founder of modern warfare. Everybody, I think, in Sweden recognizes that Gustavus Adolphus is without comparison the greater of the two, quite apart from the fact, which has, of course, to be considered in addition, that Gustavus Adolphus was greatly successful, while Charles XII became the most pyramidal failure in the history of Sweden; but in spite of all this there is one explanation of the greater popularity of Charles XII among Swedish people. Charles XII was only a very young man when he was attacked by all his neighbours, who had formed an alliance for the purpose of defeating him and Sweden. He went out to that war without anything to his credit as a statesman or military leader, but was, in fact, only a boy still. He defeated his enemies, one after the other, in a glorious manner, beating the Russians at Narva and winning some of the most brilliant victories in our military history, which is, as you know, not a poor one. This laid the foundation for a real hero-worship. All the mistakes of Charles XII which followed afterwards were in the field of statesmanship, and they did not impress the general public at that time as much as his fascinating military adventures, of which he never neglected to keep the people at home well informed. His failures also brought out—and this is a most important point—some qualities in Charles XII which are among those that are most admired and honoured among us Swedes:

courage, moral steadfastness and a firm belief in his ultimate success in the face of overwhelming difficulties. Charles XII was, in fact, a great 'sportsman' from the beginning, and he always remained a gentleman in the highest sense of the word. His chief fault was, perhaps, that he was too faithful to those who had become his friends, and was thus blinded to what would be best from his own point of view. The essential fact which explains the different attitude towards Charles XII and Gustavus Adolphus is, I believe, to be sought in the immense influence of Charles XII on popular Swedish imagination and in the admiration in which his name has been held owing to his great moral qualities. Nothing can be said against Gustavus Adolphus as regards his character and moral equipment, but whatever his qualities, they never exerted anything like the influence of Charles XII on the people as a whole."

We may take it, perhaps, that Bismarck was right in saying that Charles XII, rather than Gustavus Adolphus, is Sweden's most popular hero. How far was he right in calling Charles "a brutal adventurer" and in classing him among "the great slaughterers of mankind"? To form any kind of opinion upon that question one would have to study carefully the best of the many biographies of Charles XII that have been written, beginning with Voltaire's and ending perhaps with Mr. R. Nisbet Bain's.

It is interesting in the extreme to compare the portraits of Charles given us by Voltaire and Mr. Bain—the man of transcendent genius and immortal fame, and the sober, careful, relatively obscure student. In Mr. Bain's view, Voltaire's work was a brilliant "romance", responsible for "many erroneous notions"

concerning his hero—notions which he himself set out to dissipate; and certainly, with the help of all the authorities (largely Swedish) which he has consulted, Mr. Bain has succeeded in correcting his great predecessor in not a few blunders and misconceptions; but the resulting portraits are not at all unlike. It is very much the same Charles the two artists show us, though depicted in such different perspective and with such different technique.

"The pyramidal failure in the history of Sweden"—so my Swedish friend calls Charles XII. Poor hero! The disastrousness of his career is the one thing about him in regard to which all his admirers and decriers agree. The very title-page of Mr. Bain's book is an admission of it:

CHARLES XII

AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE SWEDISH EMPIRE.

1682–1719.

Voltaire is equally clear upon the point. In the preface to his "Histoire de Charles XII" he points out that the story he has to tell will contain a wholesome moral for other too-ambitious princes. "Certainement," he writes, "il n'y a point de souverain qui, en lisant la vie de Charles XII, ne doive être guéri de la folie des conquêtes. Car où est le souverain qui pût dire: 'J'ai plus de courage et de vertus, une âme plus forte, un corps plus robuste; j'entends mieux la guerre, j'ai de meilleures troupes que Charles XII'? Que si, avec tous ces avantages, et après tant de victoires, ce roi a été si malheureux, que devraient espérer les autres princes qui auraient la même ambition, avec moins de talens et de ressources?"

I am sorely tempted—but, of course, limitations of

space do not allow me—to cite a dozen passages at least from Mr. Bain and Voltaire, turn about. I must restrict myself to four or five. Here, to begin with, are a couple of pages from the last chapter in Mr. Bain's book, in which he sums up Charles's character and achievements:

"In figure he was tall, broad across the shoulders, slim across the loins, and with a bearing at once erect and easy. Those who approached him were impressed by his manly gravity and imperturbable calmness, yet his manner, especially towards subordinates, was always gracious and reassuring, though never familiar, and the slight but invariable smile upon his lips somewhat softened the natural severity of his expression. His features were not unpleasing. His forehead was high and broad, his eyes dark blue and 'full of martial fire', his nose large, his chin smooth and dimpled. In his early years he wore a large peruke after the French fashion, but during his warfare it was laid aside, and his dark-brown hair (it grew grey before he was thirty) was clipped short and brushed upwards all round, so that it looked like a crown, which practice, together with the growing baldness of later years, makes the forehead of Charles XII, in his portraits, seem so abnormally high and long. His personal habits were simple in the extreme. Nobody would ever have taken him for a King from his dress. He would not tolerate even the most insignificant ornament, and wore invariably a dark-blue coat with a high collar, yellow vest and trousers, large elk-skin gauntlets, a broad, unembroidered belt of buffalo hide, and huge heavily spurred riding-boots which reached above the knee, with an ordinary cavalry mantle thrown over the whole. He would never wear furs in the

coldest weather, nor armour to protect him from pikes and bullets. His food was of the simplest kind—strong fat meats, coarse vegetables, fruits, bread and a little water. His dinner rarely lasted more than a quarter of an hour, and he ate rapidly and in perfect silence. In his earlier campaigns he made use of a mattress and a counterpane, but speedily rejected them in his later years as 'unnecessary comforts', and was wont to throw himself down on a heap of straw or a bare plank and snatch a hasty repose with his cloak wrapped round him. He never slept longer than five or six hours."

Mr. Bain declares there is no truth in the idea that Charles XII was "stern and saturnine"; he urges that, on the contrary, Charles "had inherited from his father a strong sense of humour, which constantly asserted itself in all sorts of ways"; but a sense of humour is not one of Mr. Bain's own many and striking merits, as he shows rather comically a few lines lower down on this very page, for, in proceeding to defend his hero against the more serious charge of being a hard and cruel man, he bases his case upon the way in which the great warrior, in his correspondence home during his campaigns, "is perpetually inquiring after the health of his sisters and his grandmother; always writes to them most often when he hears they are unwell; never forgets their birthdays, and tries to the utmost of his power to comfort them in their affliction"; while "his dog Pompey used to sleep at the foot of his bed every night till it died". These and the dozen other such pleasing illustrations of the kindlier side of Charles's character were all worth noting, and they help us to know him better, but they would not count for much on the Day of Judgment!

That Charles showed himself on occasions "hard and cruel" there is, of course, no gainsaying; notably in the famous case of Patkul, whom he condemned to be broken on the wheel. Voltaire narrates that hideous incident simply and candidly, concluding with these words: "Le seul roi de Suède, élevé dans les principes du despotisme, crut n'avoir fait qu'un acte de justice, tandis que toute l'Europe condamnait sa cruauté."

Apart from this one bad blot upon his fame, Charles comes out very well from Voltaire's study of him. I can cite only a few more lines from it—I give them in French, because Voltaire's prose loses so much in translation:

"Charles XII était d'une taille avantageuse et noble; il avait un très beau front, de grands yeux bleus remplis de douceur, un nez bien formé, mais le bas du visage désagréable, trop souvent défiguré par un rire fréquent qui ne partait que les lèvres, presque point de barbe, ni de cheveux. Il parlait très peu, et ne répondait souvent que par ce rire dont il avait pris l'habitude. On observait à sa table un silence profond. Il avait conservé dans l'inflexibilité de son caractère cette timidité qu'on nomme mauvaise honte. Il eût été embarrassé dans une conversation, parce que, s'étant donné tout entier aux travaux et à la guerre, il n'avait jamais connu la société. Il n'avait lu jusqu'à son loisir chez les Turcs que les 'Commentaires de César' et 'l'Histoire d'Alexandre'; mais il avait écrit quelques reflexions sur la guerre et sur ses campagnes depuis 1700 jusqu'à 1709. Il l'avoua au chevalier de Folard, et lui dit que ce manuscrit avait été perdu à la malheureuse journée de Poltava. . . ."

Voltaire, while deprecating the idea that any importance should be attached to the religious opinions "of

a sovereign so ill-educated", proceeds to touch upon the question of Charles's attitude towards the Lutheran Church. He thinks that the King remained a Lutheran at heart until 1707, but that he began then to fall away from orthodoxy and that, during his sojourn among the Turks, "ayant vu plus de diverses religions, il étendit plus loin son indifférence". He cites as witnesses to this several men of note who knew Charles. "Le Comte de Croissy pense de même," he says, "et m'a dit plusieurs fois que ce prince ne conserva de ses premiers principes que celui d'une predestination absolue, dogme qui favorisait son courage et qui justifiait ses témérités."

These passages come from Voltaire's concluding chapter. I shall supplement them with just one more extract, a passage to be found almost at the beginning of the book, touching very interestingly upon the subject of Charles's attitude towards women and wine. Voltaire has been telling how the young King, suddenly and to the astonishmnet of all about him, had abandoned all the amusements in which he had been wont to indulge:

"On l'avait soupçonné d'avoir eu une passion pour une femme de sa cour: soit que cette intrigue fût vraie ou non, il est certain qu'il renonça alors aux femmes pour jamais, non seulement de peur d'en être gouverné, mais pour donner l'exemple à ses soldats, qu'il voulait contenir dans la discipline la plus vigoureuse; peut-être encore par la vanité d'être le seul de tous les rois qui domptât un penchant si difficile à surmonter. Il résolut aussi de s'abstenir de vin tout le reste de sa vie. Les uns m'ont dit qu'il n'avait pris ce parti que pour dompter en tout la nature, et pour ajouter une nouvelle vertu à son héroisme; mais le

plus grand nombre m'a assuré qu'il voulut par là se punir d'un excès qu'il avait commis et d'un affront qu'il avait fait à table à une femme en présence même de la reine sa mère. Si cela est ainsi, cette condamnation de soi-même, et cette privation qu'il s'imposa toute sa vie, sont une espèce d'héroisme non moins admirable."

Voltaire was not only a great wit himself, but the cause, inevitably, of wit in others. His "Histoire de Charles XII", in particular, has called forth many lively and amusing comments, especially from its hostile critics. Mably declared that its author "courait comme un fou à la suite d'un fou"; Montesquieu, laughing at what he considered the biographer's excessive claims for his hero, likened him to those monks who in their literary productions are concerned less with the theme under treatment than with the glory of their Order. "Voltaire," he declared in the phrase which has become classic—"Voltaire écrit pour son couvent." Frederic the Great also joined the discussion in the course of his treatise on the exploits and character of Charles XII, and made a bit of a hit. Voltaire, he said, "has taken his military course in Homer and in Virgil". All this is first-rate chaff and quite good criticism, but the fact remains that it was through Voltaire's book that Charles XII became known to the whole world and that, while it can be elaborated and corrected—he himself spent thirty years and more on elaborations and corrections after it first appeared—it can never be superseded. A French critic of note, M. Geffroy, in the "Revue des Deux Mondes" for November, 1869 (inspired, perhaps, by the great Frederic's remark), said what I think may be taken for the last word on the subject: "Sans le livre de

Voltaire . . . 'Charles XII', à vrai dire, n'aurait pas la moitié du renom qu'il a conquis : cet Achille a trouvé son Homère." [1]

The range of English literature has grown so immense that even the most cultured foreigners (to say nothing of ourselves !) are obliged to confess to big gaps in their acquaintance with it. I have alluded to one such gap in the case of Swedish readers, the "Cambridge Modern History"; another is Dr. Johnson. As Professor Yrjö Hirn pointed out two or three years ago in an extremely interesting and scholarly volume, Dr. Johnson and his writings, and even Boswell's great biography of him, are almost entirely unknown in Sweden. I have met quite learned Swedes, one of them a Professor of Literature, unfamiliar even with the famous lines on "Swedish Charles" in which Dr. Johnson challenged comparison with Juvenal—even with the last line of all ! I have a good pretext, therefore, for appending them here as an appropriate and decorative tail-piece :

On what foundation stands the warrior's pride,
How just the hopes, let Swedish Charles decide.
A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,
No dangers fright him and no labours tire ;
O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,
Unconquer'd lord of pleasure and of pain ;
No joys to him pacific sceptres yield,
War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field.

[1] Some passages from M. Geffroy's article are cited in the very admirable introduction by M. Georges Bengesco in his edition of the "Histoire de Charles XII", included in "Oeuvres Choisies de Voltaire", Librairie des Bibliophiles, 1890 ; but anyone interested in the subject will find his trouble well repaid if he will go to the back volume of the "Revue des Deux Mondes" for the complete essay.

Behold surrounding kings their pow'rs combine,
And one capitulate and one resign :
Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain.
" Think nothing gain'd," he cries, " till naught remain
On Moscow's walls, till Gothic standards fly
And all be mine beneath the polar sky ! "
The march begins, in military state,
And nations on his eye suspended wait.
Stern Famine guards the solitary coast,
And Winter barricades the realms of Frost.
He comes, nor want nor cold his course delay !—
Hide, blushing glory, hide Pultowa's day !
The vanquish'd hero leaves his broken bands,
And shows his miseries in distant lands ;
Condemn'd, a needy supplicant, to wait
While ladies interpose and slaves debate.
But did not Chance at length her error mend ?
Did no subverted empire mark his end ?
Did rival monarchs give the fatal wound ?
Or hostile millions press him to the ground ?
His fall was destin'd to a barren strand,
A petty fortress and a dubious hand ;
He left the name at which the world grew pale
To point a moral and adorn a tale.

CHAPTER IX

ENGLISH WRITERS AND SWEDISH READERS

IT is hardly too much to say that for ten years past Jack London has been Sweden's most popular novelist. Only during the last two decades have the Swedes taken to writing novels to any great extent for themselves—no longer "as single spies", that is to say, like Selma Lagerlöf and her dozen or so less famous predecessors and contemporaries, but, like our British and American craftsmen, "in battalions". The years since the war have produced a big crop of home-grown fiction without bringing to the front any remarkable new talent. Here and there a Swedish novel has gone rapidly into an eighth or ninth or tenth edition, thanks very largely to the effective cover-designs in which some of the Stockholm publishers excel, but very few indeed have won any kind of recognition from the critics who count. Our novelists still lead the way.

I amused myself not long ago by compiling for the American "Bookman" a list of the twenty British and American writers of fiction most popular in post-war Sweden. Absolute accuracy was out of the question, but I compared notes with a leading Stockholm pub-

lisher and a very capable young bookseller, so the list may be taken as at all events an approximation to the truth. Here it is:

1. Jack London.
2. Florence Barclay.
3. Elinor Glyn.
4. Ethel Dell.
5. Berta Ruck.
6. Gene Stratton-Porter.
7. Eleanor H. Porter.
8. W. J. Locke.
9. Cosmo Hamilton.
10. John Galsworthy.
11. Stephen McKenna.
12. H. G. Wells.
13. Arnold Bennett.
14. Conan Doyle.
15. Marie Corelli.
16. Hall Caine.
17. Bernard Shaw.
18. Rudyard Kipling.
19. Jerome K. Jerome.
20. Victor Bridges.

If one were to inquire exhaustively into the matter, one might have to modify the order in which these twenty novelists are placed and one might have to omit a few names, replacing them by others; but the above is near enough.[1]

It is an amusingly incongruous collection, is it not? The first three, in particular, offer a quaint medley, but the most curious thing about these is that they all make their strongest appeal here to the same class —the not very highly educated girl of from twenty to twenty-five. And what is more, it is the *same* girl —it is not the several varieties of her. The very first whom I questioned told me that her three favourite novelists were Jack London, Mrs. Barclay and Elinor

[1] Since I made out this list there have been some changes. Now, in 1926, W. J. Locke follows Jack London and is followed by Sir Hall Caine. Then come Mrs. Barclay, John Galsworthy, Gene Stratton-Porter (but *not* Eleanor H.), Berta Ruck and Ethel Dell; Mrs. Glyn is no longer a great favourite, a Stockholm bookseller reports. After Ethel Dell come Oscar Wilde, H. G. Wells, Conan Doyle and Arnold Bennett. Sir Philip Gibbs has gone ahead of his elder brother, Cosmo Hamilton. R. L. Stevenson is now increasing in vogue.

Glyn. If Mrs. Glyn ever allows herself to smile superciliously at Mrs. Barclay's novels, she may, or may not, find comfort in the reflection that in thousands of young female hearts throughout Sweden her own books reign harmoniously side by side with Jack London's!

There was an element of chance about Mrs. Barclay's vogue in Sweden. The first Swedish publisher who was offered the translation rights of "The Rosary" would not take them. His literary adviser, a very clever critic, declared emphatically that the work could not possibly have any sale in Sweden. "Our women are much too modern," he declared; "Mrs. Barclay is altogether too behind the times for them." Most people in the Swedish book world at that period —fifteen years ago—would probably have been inclined to agree with him, but events have proved him to have been entirely wrong. Someone more responsive made acquaintance with "The Rosary" and drew another publisher's attention to it, and since then all Mrs. Barclay's books have been translated. It is a noteworthy thing, by the way, that when British or American authors sell in Swedish, there is always a proportionately brisk demand for their work in the original.

Jack London's pre-eminence in Sweden over all other novelists, male or female—more than thirty of his books have been translated—would make an interesting study for anyone sufficiently well versed in his writings. It is to be attributed in part, of course, to the inherent freshness and vigour of his style, which have won him admirers everywhere; in part to the open-air atmosphere of his books and to his love for and knowledge of animals and wild life generally—these

things undoubtedly count for a good deal with the Swedes; in part, perhaps, to efficient translating and to clever publishing.

Of Numbers 6 and 7 on my list I must confess to knowing nothing whatever, but with Numbers 8–13 I am on fairly familiar ground. W. J. Locke's extreme popularity is well deserved and easily understood. Urbane, humorous, entertaining, thoroughly *au fait* with the very attractive aspects of French life which he is fondest of depicting, he was bound to please the more intelligent Swedish novel-readers. What puzzles me, however, is that Anthony Hope, with his wit and charm and grace and brilliancy, is comparatively little known to the Swedes. For this I can't help thinking that luck is largely accountable. It is evident that the Swedish publishers recognized that Anthony Hope was a writer worth experimenting with, for more than fifteen of his novels in Swedish form are included in the catalogue of the Royal Library of Stockholm. But many of them were done in condensed versions and doubtless with all their merits lost, whereas the Swedish editions of Locke are for the most part very good.

And the blithe and sparkling Cosmo Hamilton—what of him? Well, "Scandal", as one would expect, was a "best seller". "The Princess of New York", "Who Cares?" "The Door that has no Key", "The Miracle of Love" and "Adam's Clay" are all very popular in Sweden.

Of the next four novelists it is not easy to say which is really the most popular; but Mr. Galsworthy is certainly the one most generally admired and discussed in literary circles, and of late his writings have sold better (so I hear on good authority) than those of either

Mr. Wells or Mr. Bennett. Somehow or other, "Mr. Britling Sees It Through" has not had a large audience in its Swedish version, though one meets a good many people who agree that it is a wonderful book; Mr. Wells's "Outline of History" has been a great success. Stephen McKenna so far is known only by his "Sonia" and "Sonia Married", but these two volumes have attracted a good deal of notice.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, of course, is chiefly famous for his "Sherlock Holmes"; otherwise he had not been very much read until "The New Revelation" introduced him to quite a different class of people. Sir Arthur can count upon a sympathetic hearing from a wide circle in Sweden for the "message" which he feels he is called to deliver to mankind and to which he intends to devote all his best energies throughout the rest of his life. Marie Corelli was more of a favourite with Swedish readers some years ago than she is now. Bernard Shaw, more popular on the Swedish stage than any English dramatist except Shakespeare, does not sell much in book form, though several of his novels have been translated, and "Cashel Byron's Profession" ran as a feuilleton in the "Svenska Dagblad".

We have now come nearly to the end of our list. Kipling's "Kim" was welcomed by discriminating critics as a veritable masterpiece and continues to be read and talked about, and his "Jungle Tales" are delighted in. Jerome K. Jerome is still very popular. Victor Bridges, one of the most recent successes in England, both as a story-teller and as a humorist, is finding appreciative readers here also in increasing numbers.

Besides these twenty, a number of other names

call for mention, and, as I have already suggested, some of them ought perhaps by rights to be substituted for some of the above. That dashing and ingenious romance of secret service, "Greenmantle", has won a prominent place for John Buchan. Mrs. Belloc Lowndes is winning an audience for herself. Rider Haggard is read, but not very widely. Barry Pain is known by his "Eliza". Robert Hichens, George Birmingham and De Vere Stacpoole are making headway. Among Americans, Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett, Mary Roberts Rinehart, Charles G. D. Roberts, and, more recently, Sinclair Lewis are among the most conspicuous.

It will be noted that, with the exception of Jack London, I have spoken only of living writers. Among the recently dead few are better known in Sweden than Oscar Wilde, whose works are issued by the big firm of Bonnier in a uniform edition. His plays also retain their popularity, more especially "An Ideal Husband". A large number of Robert Louis Stevenson's books have been translated, but I fear unworthily and in cheap, condensed editions. Sir Walter Scott is forgotten. Thackeray is little more than a strange name. Dickens, however, still flourishes, and an entirely new version of "Pickwick" by Mr. August Brunius, one of Sweden's best English scholars, is to be produced presently with all the original illustrations. The first Swedish version was quite good in its way, Mr. Brunius tells me, but the translator did not know London and there were no dictionaries of slang in those days to interpret to him the colloquialisms of Sam Weller and his like, so there were a number of almost unavoidable mistakes. Wilkie Collins, Charles Reade, Miss Braddon, Clark Russell—all these and many others of their

period still are read by the middle-aged here. Bret Harte and Mark Twain are being forgotten.

To conclude with a generalization: it may, I think, be said that on the whole the Swedes look to British and American fiction chiefly for distraction and entertainment. Even in the case of Mr. Galsworthy they are more interested in the vivid pictures he gives of English life than in his reformer's zeal and humanitarian ideals. For edification and emotion they turn rather to the best of their own imaginative writers, in particular to Strindberg, Selma Lagerlöf and Verner von Heidenstam, and to the poets, Victor Rydberg, Gustaf Fröding and Erik Axel Karfeldt. The works of all these six sell by the ten thousand. The saying that no man is a prophet in his own country does not hold good in Sweden.

CHAPTER X

BULSTRODE WHITELOCKE AND HIS EMBASSY TO SWEDEN

PART I.—THE JOURNEY FROM LONDON TO UPSALA, NOVEMBER–DECEMBER, 1653

IN the biographies of Queen Christina of Sweden one comes occasionally on allusions to that unique book, "A Journal of the Swedish Embassy in the Years 1653 and 1654", by Bulstrode Whitelocke. The chapters in it which tell of Whitelocke's journey from London to Upsala, and of his dealings there with the young Queen, are of extraordinary interest. The whole story of that diplomatic mission would make a wonderful "film", with its "close-ups" first of Cromwell, then of the ambassador himself, then of the lively, clever, exuberant, eccentric Queen and of her venerable Chancellor, Axel Oxenstierna, Sweden's most famous statesman, who in the great days of her father, Gustavus Adolphus, had been described once, punningly, as "the axle upon which the whole world moves". There would be no lack of vivacity and variety in the successive scenes: the embarking of the ambassador and his suite, a hundred persons in all, with his coaches and carriages and horses and impedimenta of every description, on the six vessels—two of them armed frigates—placed at his disposal; the buffeting about of the picturesque old-world fleet upon the stormy

waters of the North Sea; the arrival at Gothenburg; the long overland progress of the cavalcade across snow-bound Sweden, with a score of vivid glimpses into the life of the country; and then all the pageant-like ceremonies of the Upsala Court.

What sort of person, really, was Bulstrode Whitelocke? It is not very easy to say. He had something about him of the late Lord Wolverhampton,[1] that solid, sturdy, dignified, immensely able Liberal statesman, whom it is still difficult not to speak of as Sir Henry Fowler. But he was far more pompous than Lord Wolverhampton—indeed, while by no means lacking in humour, Whitelocke's naïve pomposity makes his narrative sometimes a little funnier than he meant or knew it to be. Now and again, in the self-complacent way in which he tells of his own astute and resourceful proceedings, he reminds one of another great servant of the State, the late Lord Curzon. Despite their weaknesses, there was something really big, occasionally a touch of the heroic even, in both Curzon and Whitelocke. On the whole, I think that Whitelocke, the less brilliant of the two, was also the less vain. He is certainly more artless in his vanity, as we find him revealed in his book, a carefully kept diary, copied out afresh in his own handwriting, and somewhat elaborated, after his return home. One very curious feature of this diary is that, in his concern lest he should seem egotistic, he avoids the use of the pronouns "I" and "me" and "mine" throughout. He alludes to himself always as "Whitelocke" and keeps religiously to the third person. He seems to have contemplated

[1] In his character and capacities, but not in his personal appearance, as one may see from the portrait in Payne Fisher's volume of "Latin Panegyrics".

the eventual printing of it, but it did not see the light until 1772, when, the manuscript having come into the possession of the British Museum, Dr. Charles Morton, then the Librarian, edited it for publication, with a prefatory memoir. A new issue in two volumes, revised and annotated by Mr. Henry Reeves, appeared in 1855.

"The son of Sir James Whitelocke, knight, one of the Justices of the King's Bench, by Elizabeth his wife, daughter of Edward Bulstrode, of Hedgley Bulstrode, in the County of Buckingham, Esquire", Bulstrode Whitelocke, or Lord Commissioner Whitelocke as he is sometimes called, was born on 6th August, 1605, in Fleet Street, in the house of his mother's uncle, Sir George Croke, afterwards one of the Justices of the Common Pleas, and was educated at Merchant Taylors' School and St. John's College, Oxford. Proceeding to the Middle Temple, "he became a great proficient in the common law; not neglecting, at the same time, every other branch of polite and useful literature". In the midst of his more serious studies, we are told in Dr. Morton's memoir of him, "he showed a gallant turn of mind by being one of the chief managers of the Royal Masque, which was exhibited by the Inns of Court in February, 1633, before King Charles I and his Queen and their Court, at Whitehall. To him in particular was committed the whole care and charge of the music for this great masque, which was so well performed that it excelled any music that had before that time been heard in England".

Dr. Morton does not give his authority for this last statement. It may very likely have been a well-founded claim, but I suspect that one of the principal authorities for it was Mr. Bulstrode Whitelocke!

A Counsellor-at-Law, whom Hampden, when he came to be prosecuted for refusing the payment of ship-money, often consulted; one of the Burgesses of Marlow in the Long Parliament which met in November, 1640; Chairman of the Committee appointed to draw up articles and manage the evidence against the Earl of Strafford when the latter was impeached by the Commons for high treason: so Whitelocke's political career began. Associated more closely than ever with Hampden in 1642, he was victimized in October of that year by Prince Rupert's brigade, who rifled and plundered his seat at Fawley Court; in the following month he appeared among the forces who opposed the King at Brentford. I have not space here to trace his gradual development into one of the most important, but by no means one of the most whole-hearted, of Cromwell's supporters. In March, 1647, Cromwell appointed him a Commissioner of the Great Seal at £1,500 a year, a post he was glad to accept, although it involved a financial loss to him, for he had been making an income of about £2,000 by his practice in the law.

Cromwell himself shall sum up for us Bulstrode Whitelocke's character and record down to the year 1653, when the Embassy to Sweden was being arranged.[1] It was generally believed that the nomination of Whitelocke as ambassador was a convenient pretext for removing from England a possible opponent to the Protector's future plans. It seems certain, at least, that Cromwell looked on him with disfavour and distrust. Whitelocke, who was now a man of forty-nine, not in good health (having in some way injured a leg),

[1] The purpose of the Embassy was to conclude a commercial treaty between the two countries.

married, and with a large family, was very reluctant to accept the mission proposed to him, and did his utmost to escape from it, but Cromwell, as ever, was adamant. He firmly but courteously set aside all Whitelocke's arguments and excuses. One excuse was that Mrs. Whitelocke dreaded her husband's leaving her, for she was expecting a child. "I know your lady very well," replied Cromwell, "and that she is a good woman and a religious woman; indeed, I think she is: and I durst undertake that, in a matter of this nature, wherein the interest of God and of his people is concerned, as they are in your undertaking of this business, I dare say my Lady will not oppose it." We are given a full record of the dialogue between them:

CROMWELL: "The Council have pitched upon you unanimously as the fittest man in the nation for this service; we know your abilities, having long conversed with you; we know you have languages and have travelled and understand the interest of Christendom; and I have known you in the army to endure hardships and to be healthful and strong, and of mettle, discretion, and parts, most fit for this employment: you are so indeed; really, no man is so fit for it as you are. We know you to be a gentleman of a good family, related to persons of honour; and your present office of Commissioner of the Seal will make you the more acceptable to her [Queen Christina of Sweden]. I do earnestly desire you to undertake it."

Whitelocke was a strong man in his way and a very clever man, but he was no match for Cromwell. He gives us a full note of his conversations with his wife and with "an ancient, sober, discreet servant" named Cooke on the subject. Here is a pregnant passage

from his discussion with Cooke, who had urged him to go. Whitelocke himself had been arguing that, while there were perils for him both at home and abroad, he would risk more by acceptance than by refusal.

COOKE: ". . . I have heard that our great man —I mean my Lord General—would have you to go; and if it be so, and yet you will stay at home, I doubt there may be as much danger for you to stay as to go."

WHITELOCKE: "It is true the General would have me go, but I am not bound to obey him in all things."

COOKE: "I am deceived if he will not be obeyed in what he hath a mind to."

WHITELOCKE: "I am not under his command. What can he do to me?"

COOKE: "What can he do? What can he *not* do? Do not we all see he does what he list? We poor countrymen are forced to obey him to our cost; and if he have a mind to punish us or you, it's an old proverb that it is an easy thing to find a staff to beat a dog; and I would not have you to anger him, lest you bring danger and trouble too upon you and your family and State, that's the truth on't."

That was indeed the truth on't, Whitelocke ruefully admitted, and accordingly he yielded. Mrs. Whitelocke, who was his third wife, by the way,[1] opposed this decision with all her might and main, but when at last she found her opposition useless, she exerted herself to provide him well with necessaries and comforts, "wine, beer, meal, baked meats, butter, cheese, fruits, sweetmeats",

[1] By his first wife he had two sons; these were now grown men and were to accompany him on his journey. By his second wife he had nine children. When, in answer to Queen Christina's questions, Whitelocke said that he had had children by all his three wives, that lively lady exclaimed: "Vous êtes incorrigible!"

and " all household stuff, hard to be met with in Sweden but necessary for his accommodation ".

By 6th November everything had been arranged, and Whitelocke was able to start on his expedition with all his retinue, comprising :

Two Chaplains.
A Physician and an Apothecary.
A Steward.
A Receiver and Chief Secretary.
A Gentleman of the Horse.
A Clerk of the Stable and Sewer.
A Second Sewer.
Twelve Gentlemen, " admitted to Whitelocke's table " (including his two sons) and their servants, in number twenty-five.
Two musicians, two trumpeters, a barber, butlers, cooks, coachmen, postillions, grooms, servitors, pages, a porter, a sculleryman, and, finally, three laundry-women !

The six vessels which were at his disposal and under his command were :

The " Phœnix " frigate, a man-of-war carrying forty-four guns, " one of the best ships for sailing or for fighting in Europe ; in her were two hundred seamen, well chosen and well commanded ; in her went Whitelocke and his sons, his chaplains, Dr. Whistler, and most of the gentlemen and the women ".
The " Elizabeth " frigate, with forty guns. " In her went more of the gentlemen."
The " Adventure ", a merchantman, " fitted as a stable for the horses, with provisions for them ". The " yeoman of the stable ", the coachmen, etc., were on board of her.
The " Fortune ", a merchantman, with baggage and provisions.

A stout private man-of-war, "commanded by Captain Welch, a bold, fighting seaman; he had eighty men of his own temper, about ten great guns, and sufficient stores of small shot and of arms and weapons on board her".

A "catch [1] of the State's", available "to carry intelligence", or for other services.

The North Sea, as some of us know only too well, can be very unpleasant when it likes, and it was in one of its worst moods that November. The voyage was attended by intense discomfort and not a little risk from the weather, quite apart from the possibilities of encounters with the Dutch, with whom we were at war. The fleet took nine days over the crossing. The last twenty-four hours were almost the worst of all. Whitelocke, who seems to have been a first-rate sailor himself, gives a very characteristic account of their experiences. They were, he knew, somewhere near the Skaw, and the ships had furled the sails, "not willing to adventure any farther in her course this dark night", for fear of the Danish coast. There was a tremendous sea on, and all the vessels, "being on drift, rolled much more than at other times, sufficiently affrighting some of the company, who solemnly repented that they had left good colleges and kind mothers and friends, full and wholesome diet and safety on dry land, to come to stinking water, salt and bad meat boiled in it, such as they could not eat". He tells us, and one believes him, that he shared all these hardships cheerfully himself, and that by the time they approached Gothenburg next day he had quite won the good will of all on board the "Phœnix". He had got into their favour and affection, he flatters himself, "by

[1] Doubtless a ketch.

his kindness and familiarity, and by being much on the decks and drolling with them and discoursing, especially by affording them now and again a douse in the neck or a kick in jest, seeing them play and then giving them some of his own tobacco, wine and strong waters, as there was occasion, which demeanours please those kind of people ".

Whitelocke, as we shall see, was to adopt a severe rôle in Sweden in regard to the drinking of " healths ", and he was clearly an abstemious man alike by taste and principle, but he seems to have laid in an ample stock of wines and " cordials ". Among the contributions that had been made to his stores by well-wishers was " a noble present " from one Mr. Bushell, who had been a servant to the Lord Chancellor Bacon—" a curious rich cabinet ", covered with green velvet and silver lace; " in it were two dozen of quart glasses of the most rare and best distilled spirits of hot waters, after the direction of the Lord; and every glass had its screws and cover of Welsh silver, chiefly found out by himself. It was suitable to the time and country ".

We need not trouble ourselves with what happened at Gothenburg, where Whitelocke and his suite arrived at last, and where they had to stay until the end of the month, making preparations for the long and wearisome journey to Upsala.

On 30th November the great cavalcade was set in motion. The Ambassador thus begins his account of the day's proceedings:

" Early in the morning were come to Whitelocke's door a hundred wagons out of the country; they were with four wheels, very small, and drawn by one horse apiece, or by two beasts or cows abreast. They will not hold above one large trunk, or two little ones,

in a wagon; they drive slowly, and the more slowly because many of their wagoners be women. There were also brought in by the country a hundred saddle horses, which are small and hard trotters; whereof one may be the more sensible by reason of their saddles, which are large, almost like the French saddles for size and shape, but far different for ease: they are made of wood, without any cover or stuffing, neither cloth nor leather, not anything upon them but he that strides the bare wood; yet they are so well made, that in riding they do not prove so hard as one would fear them to be. Their bits generally are a piece of ram's horn and their bridle a hempen rope; their stirrup, a withe writhed together; and better could not be had, this being the equipage of that country". . . .

There was much confusion at first, apparently, but Whitelocke took things in hand, and as soon as the wagons were loaded "he appointed them to be sent away, with some of his servants to attend them, whom he ordered to be constantly with them, some between every division of the wagons and the gentleman of the horse to bring up the rear". The quartermaster, cooks and butlers were sent on ahead to make provision at the village at which they would all spend the night.

"Whitelocke mounted upon his best horse, of excellent shape and mettle; he had a rich saddle and pistols, himself habited in plain grey English cloth; his other horse, being also very beautiful and with a rich saddle and pistols, was led leer;[1] the rest of his English horses, besides those which the grooms rode, were mounted by his gentlemen, as many as there were horses for. . . . After the horsemen came Whitelocke's travelling-coach, being of blue velvet, with blue silk and silver fringe

[1] Without a rider.

and richly gilded; it would hold eight persons, and was drawn by six bay English horses, of a good size for travel and very handsome. . . . In this coach he ordered Mr. Ingelo [one of his two chaplains] to ride, being sickly, and Colonel Potley, who was too unwieldy to ride on horseback.

"Last of all came the best coach of crimson velvet, very richly embroidered with silk and gilded, which cost about £400; it was large enough to hold ten persons. It was drawn by six black English horses, large and very handsome . . . : this coach he ordered to be drawn empty. With the coaches went the grooms which did not wait on Whitelocke's person, and his lacqueys went by his horse's side."

The *Landeshere*, or Governor, of the province and a number of other Swedish notabilities, as well as a Colonel Nerne, a Colonel Sinclair [1] and other officers, Swedish and Scottish, mounted their horses to accompany Whitelocke out of Gothenburg, and as he passed through the market-place and through the southern quarters of the town he was saluted by the citizens, who had "put themselves in arms to the number of two thousand, proper men and gallantly habited . . . with loud volleys of shot". From the ramparts "the cannoneers bade him adieu with discharging all their great guns, which roared a great while; and some of their complimental bullets came very near to Whitelocke as he rode, but, he supposed, not directed at him".

At a point about a mile from Gothenburg the *Landeshere* and the other dignitaries took formal leave of Whitelocke, who, finding that the road was rough

[1] There were a great many Scotsmen in the Swedish army at that time.

and stony, now dismounted, to proceed in his coach. A village which he calls Leerum was his first stopping-place. A "very mean" little village he calls it: "himself lay in his field-bed, most of his people in straw; the meat was not good, the beer worse—exceeding strong and thick; their best refreshment was lusty fires and their own cheerfulness, which Whitelocke increased what he could". Before leaving this village, Whitelocke was met by an emissary from the Queen, sent by her to welcome him and to escort him the rest of the way to Upsala, taking all necessary measures *en route* to provide for his comfort. Even so, the travelling was difficult and the night quarters often very poor. "The weather was extreme and hard frost," we read in an entry dated 3rd December, "so that one of Whitelocke's pages, Herr Elsing, having a fall from his horse, did break his arm, as seldom any in the frosty weather had a fall without the breach of some limb. Dr. Whistler . . . set the page's arm very well, so that by bolsters and ordering of him he was able to endure riding in the coach; and rather chose to endure much pain than to stay behind his master, whom he saw so tender and careful of him and of all his fellow-servants." That night the stopping-place was at a small village at which the food was tainted. Whitelocke himself became "exceeding ill and feverish" in consequence; "but he took something that did him good, through the mercy of God, who gave him recovery of his health, and he endeavoured to cheer himself and his company in their hardships".

Skara (a few miles south of Lidköping, on Lake Venner) was the first town to be reached. Whitelocke explored the place, one gathers, as thoroughly as any tourist. He visited its fourteenth-century cathedral;

"strongly built of the country stone", he describes it, "but not beautiful or curious". It was the first Swedish church he had seen, and was too full of "pictures of saints and other images" for his liking. "At the east end of it is a high altar," he continues disapprovingly, "with a rich carpet of velvet embroidered with gold and a stately crucifix upon it; there are also divers other and lesser crucifixes in several places of the church and choir. In the vestry he saw the chalices and pyxes, with pieces of the wafer in them; and none could see a difference betwixt this and the Papists' churches."

By 10th December Whitelocke had reached Örebro, a very old town with a remarkable record, famous especially as the birthplace of one of the greatest and best-loved of Swedish heroes, Engelbrekt Engelbrektson, a Dalecarlia mine-owner who in 1433 led the peasantry in a successful revolt against the tyrannical rule of King Erik,[1] Queen Margaret's successor; but to these historical associations the Ambassador makes no reference. He notes only that he and his company were well lodged there.

The next day's journey was disturbing. The cold was bitter and the road particularly bad. "Upon the way there fell out a kind of mutiny among Whitelocke's people; some of them, tired and sore with their hard horses and saddles, grumbled at their bad accommodation. Whitelocke, to appease them, alighted from his coach, called the gentleman who first began the disturbance and complained of his being ill, caused him to alight and go in Whitelocke's room into his coach, and Whitelocke mounted on the Swedish horse,

[1] Whose Queen was Philippa, daughter of Henry IV of England.

and in that furniture and equipage rode along with the rest of his company, drolling and partaking with them in their hardships; which, with his gentle usage of the offender, gave more satisfaction than severity at such a time would have done to his people."

At last, on 20th December, the Ambassador and his long-suffering companions were in sight of their goal. Whitelocke's detailed description of their reception is so characteristic and so interesting that I am reluctant to condense it. He was to have some trouble with the too unceremonious "Master of the Ceremonies" before he succeeded in making that gentleman "keep his place":

"Being come within half a Swedish league [1] of Upsal, his pages, lacqueys, coachmen, postillions and grooms in their liveries, and all his people in their order, he was advertised that Monsieur Vanderlin, the master of the ceremonies, was hard by to meet him, in one of the Queen's coaches; and, both of them being alighted for salutation, Vanderlin in a careless garb, in French, told Whitelocke that he was sent by the Queen to meet him and to conduct him to Upsal, and that she was glad he was come so well thither. . . .

"About an English mile before they came to Upsal, two senators, Messieurs Tobe and Vanderlin, brother to the master of the ceremonies, and much company with them, were come forth of their coaches, and stood by the highway to meet Whitelocke, who, before he came near them, alighted from his coach; and, after salutations, Vanderlin the senator told Whitelocke, and spoke in Swedish, which was interpreted in Latin, that the Queen had sent them to meet him on the way . . . that she had sent her coaches to transport

[1] One Swedish mile = seven English.

him to Upsal and desired to receive him with all honour."

Whitelocke answered suitably in English, which was interpreted also into Latin, and then, at Senator Vanderlin's request, entered the Queen's *carrosse de corps*, the two Senators and the Master of Ceremonies taking their seats in it also. The coach, we read, "was of green velvet inside and outside, richly laced with broad silver laces, and fringed; the harness studded and gilded. Six handsome white horses drew it and about twenty of the Queen's lacqueys in trunk-hose of yellow, laced with blue and yellow lace, attended it: there were in all eighteen coaches, with six horses apiece, and about six other coaches, with many of the Queen's gentlemen on horseback". The two senators were "very civil", Whitelocke adds, "and had good discourse in French; but the master of the ceremonies of so slight a carriage that Whitelocke was the more reserved with him".

Thus the Ambassador was brought into Upsala, "multitudes of people by the way and in the town spectators of his entry; and through the town they brought him to the market-place, to a fair brick house provided and furnished by the Queen for his entertainment: none besides the Queen's castle a fairer house than this was".

Here, for a moment, we may take leave of His Excellency, while he proceeds to his sleeping apartment on the second floor, "the Queen's and Whitelocke's gentlemen" walking in front of him, "bareheaded",

CHAPTER XI

BULSTRODE WHITELOCKE AND HIS EMBASSY TO SWEDEN

PART II.—THE QUEEN AND THE AMBASSADOR: UPSALA, DECEMBER, 1653—MAY, 1654

QUEEN CHRISTINA'S character and career have been the theme of many pens. There are biographies of her in almost every European language —in English there are several. Most of us, therefore, have read something about her, but it may be well to refresh our memories a little regarding her enigmatic personality before we come to Bulstrode Whitelocke's record of his conversations with her at Upsala. As a rule she has found her chief censors among Protestants [1] and her chief panegyrists among Catholics, but in Whitelocke—at all events at this period, before he knew of her change of religion—she was to win one of her warmest and most whole-hearted admirers. "I pray, tell me," Cromwell said to him in London in the following July, "is the Queen a lady of such rare parts as is reported of her?" To which the Ambassador made answer: "Truly, sir, she is a lady excellently qualified, of rare abilities of mind, perfect in many

[1] There are, however, several notable exceptions. Ranke, for instance, in his "History of the Popes", gives a quite sympathetic portrait of her, and she has had a very fervent champion in one of her English biographers, Mr. F. W. Bain.

languages and most sorts of learning, especially history, and, beyond compare with any person whom I have known, understanding the affairs and interest of all the States and Princes of Christendom."

"That is very much," commented Cromwell, perhaps a trifle amused at the Ambassador's enthusiasm, "but what are her principles in matters of religion?"

"They are not such as I could wish they were," Whitelocke replied. "They are too much inclined to the manner of that country." By which he clearly meant "too much inclined" to the "Sabbath-breaking" and sundry other reprehensible proceedings which, as he had seen with regret, still persisted in Sweden in spite of the Reformation. He had not as yet the slightest suspicion that he had been grievously hoodwinked, and that the artful young Queen had already, to all intents and purposes, gone over to Rome!

There has been so much controversy in respect to Queen Christina's abdication of the Swedish Crown and her abandonment of the Lutheran religion that it is almost impossible for her biographers, as Mr. F. W. Bain has remarked, to avoid adopting a polemical attitude in endeavouring to tell her story. Mr. Bain, whose book was published in 1890, had studied conscientiously the whole literature of the subject, and if he displays vehemence sometimes in his trouncing of the Queen's worst calumniators, he seems, on the whole, to keep the balance not unfairly between her foes and friends. He is very positive that Voltaire was wrong in saying "she quitted the throne for the fine arts"; and that the Swedish historians, Fryxell and Geijer, blinded by prejudice, were equally at fault in their uncharitable diagnosis of her state of mind:

he admits many of Christina's defects and weaknesses, but he is convinced that in her adoption of the Catholic faith she was serious and sincere; it was this, he urges, that made her abdication of the throne inevitable. As for the secretiveness which marked her behaviour during the years which preceded, Mr. Bain contends that it was imposed on her by a natural instinct of self-preservation. Had her Ministers become aware of what was in her mind, it would have been impossible for her to abdicate in dignity and safety; her revenues certainly, perhaps even her life, would have been endangered. Mr. Bain's whole volume is full of interest. I should like to quote many passages from it. I must restrict myself here, however, to the reproduction of a few sentences which are to be found in almost all the books about the Queen. They are from the account of her which is the most vivid and informing of all that have come down to us, a contemporary letter written by Pierre Chanut, the French Resident (afterwards Ambassador) at her Court, a brilliant diplomatist and man of the world, and, like Christina herself, an accomplished linguist and a student of philosophy. She made of him one of her closest friends and confidants. Chanut's description of the Queen's personal appearance will help us to visualize her presently when we read how she seemed to try to "daunt" her English guest on the occasion of their first meeting, and how she and he walked up and down her audience-room together:

"Usually she appears somewhat pensive, yet passes easily and often to other expressions. . . . If she disapproves of what is said to her, a sort of cloud may be seen to spread over her face, which, without disfiguring her, yet causes terror in those who see it. The tone of

her voice is as a rule very soft, and, however firmly she pronounces her words, they are clearly recognized as those of a girl; sometimes, however, without affectation or apparent cause, she changes this tone for one stronger and louder than that of her sex, which little by little sinks back to its ordinary pitch. She is rather below the average height, which would not have been obvious had this princess been willing to make use of shoes such as ladies are wont to wear; but, in order to be more at ease in her palace, or in walking or riding, she wears only shoes with a sole and a little black heel similar to those of a man."

Having touched upon the Queen's attitude towards questions of religion—she was less interested, he says, in the differences between Protestants and Catholics than in those between philosophers, Jews and Gentiles—Chanut proceeds to catalogue all the languages she speaks, Latin, French, German, and Flemish, as well as Swedish, and to tell how she reads her Tacitus every day for amusement and how expert she is as a shot and as a horsewoman—sometimes spending ten hours together in the saddle. "She rarely speaks to the ladies of the Court," he declares, "since her exercises, or the cares of State which keep her, give no opportunity for conversation. . . . After the necessary civilities she leaves them in a corner of the room in order to go and converse with the men. If she is with those from whom she thinks nothing is to be learned, she cuts down the conversation to the absolute minimum; accordingly her servants say little to her—still, they like her, since, however little she addresses them, it is always with sweetness, and she is a good mistress, liberal even beyond her means. Sometimes she amuses herself by jesting with them, which she does with good

grace and without bitterness, yet it might be better if she abstained, because this always leaves a suspicion in those who have been its objects that they are despised . . . ."

Upon which remark Christina herself, when she came to read Chanut's letter years afterwards, penned the comment: "True; raillery procured me many enemies."

Chanut goes on to say that the Queen was avaricious of her time and allowed only five hours in the night for sleep—"only three", she herself asserted in another marginal note. "This not being sufficient, however, to restore her strength," he adds, "she is sometimes obliged, principally in summer, to sleep an hour after dinner"—to which statement Christina, when she read it, appended an emphatic "No".

Chanut continues:

"She cares little about dressing and adornment; we must not reckon it in the division of her day. She dresses in a quarter of an hour, and, excepting on great occasions and festivals, the comb alone and a knot of ribbon constitute her head-dress. Nevertheless this negligent method of doing her hair suits her face very well; but so little care does she take of it that neither in sun, wind, rain, in town or in country, does she wear hat or veil. When she rides she has for protection against the weather only a hat with feathers in it, so that a stranger who might see her hunting in her Hungarian habit, with a little collar like a man's, would never take her for a Queen."

Here, finally, is Chanut's estimate of the Queen as Sovereign:

"She asks no one's advice in her private affairs, but she deliberates in the Senate in all matters concerning the State. It is incredible how powerful she is in her council, for she adds to her position as Queen

grace, credit, benefits and a power of persuasion, such that the senators themselves are often amazed at the influence she wields over their opinions, when they are assembled. Though some attribute this to the secret influence of her sex, yet to say truth this authority arises from her personal good qualities. A king of like virtue would be absolute in his senate; in any case, that would be less surprising than to see a girl turning as she will the minds of so many old and wise councillors."

Chanut's portrait was penned in 1644. It may be supplemented by some lines written in 1653 by a compatriot of his, Huet, afterwards Bishop of Avranches. This, also, was in a letter to a correspondent in France: "As to the Northern Queen . . . she is rather plump, one shoulder higher than the other; below the middle height. Her face is refined and pretty, her hair golden. . . . There is nothing wrong with her morals; for I pay no attention to those rumours scattered, especially in Germany, to the contrary . . . she carries modesty written on her face. . . . She is easy of access, genial and courteous, yet tenacious of her majesty. . . . She is abstemious and eats sparingly, but takes wonderful pleasure in merry jests."

* * * * *

The British Ambassador's visit to the Queen's Court was to prove in the long run a great success, but it began most unpromisingly with a series of tussles between him and that Master of the Ceremonies, M. Vanderlin, whose pert bearing had impressed him so unfavourably. This gentleman had called Whitelocke to account for lack of courtesy to some of the high officials, senators and others, who had welcomed him to his dwelling and shown him to his rooms—it had been expected of the Ambassador that he should

conduct them downstairs again on their departure. Whitelocke had answered that "he was weary after his journey and a lame man, to whom the going up and down so many stairs was more painful than to others"; but, nevertheless, he desired not to be wanting in respect "to senators of that eminent degree and esteem". It was, however, the senators themselves, he contended, whose manners had been at fault, and he described with some warmth the perfunctory fashion, as it seemed to him, in which they had played their part.

The final clash came about in the evening when, at the banquet in his honour, the Ambassador refused to drink healths. Such a refusal was a thing hitherto unknown, a thing almost unimaginable, in Sweden, and the Master of the Ceremonies, already not a little excited, was almost out of his wits with astonishment and indignation. The first toast was that of Cromwell. Were they, he inquired incredulously, really to understand that the British Ambassador refused "to pledge the health of his own General"?

To which Whitelocke replied that as he "condemned no man for drinking a health" (as a mere matter of fact he did—continually and consistently!), "so they ought not to condemn him for refusing it"; "that General Cromwell had other manner of work for his soldiers than to drink healths"; and "that his performance of his General's commands in more important matters would please him better than pledging of his health".

Whitelocke's son and his physician, Dr. Whistler, took active part also in the discussion, rejoining to the appeal, "Why not drink a health?" "Why not eat a health?" "There were," Whitelocke records in his journal, "many returns of the like nature in words and gestures, full of heat and discontent."

But Queen Christina, who delighted in fresh sensations, was probably much amused, and looked forward all the more keenly to her first meeting with this new type of diplomatist. Two days later she received the Ambassador in audience.

Whitelocke's memory for detail comes out very remarkably in his record of that afternoon. Nothing seems to have escaped his eye, from the accoutrement of the porter at his own gate—"in a gown of grey cloth, laced with gardes of blue velvet between edges of gold and silver lace, two in a seam"—to the "noble and rich" habiliments of the "gentlemen of the first rank". His secretary, "for the credit of his master", had donned a rich costume. "Whitelocke himself was plain but extraordinarily rich in his habit, though without any gold or silver lace and embroidery. His suit was of black English cloth of an exceedingly fine sort, the cloak lined with the same cloth and that and the suit set with very fair rich diamond buttons; his hatband of diamonds answerable; and all of the value of £1,000."

"In the great court of the castle, at the entry upon the bridge," Whitelocke proceeds, "was a guard of one hundred musketeers, with their officer; they made a lane across the court." It was getting dark —December days are very short in Sweden—and the Queen's lacqueys carried torches as Whitelocke, preceded by the Court Marshal and numberless other high officials, mounted the "many stairs" which led them first into a large hall, then into a great chamber, "where Prince Adolphe, brother to the Prince-heritier of the Crown, then Grand Master or High Steward of Sweden, met Whitelocke; and it was observed that he had not done that honour to any ambassador before".

After an exchange of compliments and much cere-

mony, Whitelocke was at length conducted into "a large and fair" room, richly hung with cloth of Arras, at the upper end of which, "upon her chair of State of crimson velvet, with a canopy of the same over it", sat the Queen. Some ladies stood behind the Queen and a very great number of lords, officers and gentlemen of the Court filled the room, which was lit by "great candlesticks full of wax lights, besides a great number of torches". Whitelocke's pen-picture of Christina herself I must give in full:

"As soon as he came within this room, he put off his hat and then the Queen put off her cap, after the fashion of men, and came two or three steps forward upon the foot carpet. This, and her being covered and rising from her seat, caused Whitelocke to know her to be the Queen, which otherwise had not been easy to be discerned, her habit being of plain grey stuff; her petticoat reached to the ground, over that a jacket such as men wear, of the same stuff, reaching to her knees; on her left side, tied with crimson ribbon, she wore the jewel of the Order of Amaranta; her cuffs ruffled *à la mode*; no gorget or band, but a black scarf about her neck, tied before with a black ribbon, as soldiers and mariners sometimes used to wear; her hair was braided and hung loose upon her head; she wore a black velvet cap, lined with sables and turned up after the fashion of the cavalry, which she used to put off and on as men do their hats.

"Her countenance was sprightly, but somewhat pale; she had much of majesty in her demeanour, and though her person were of the smaller size, yet her mien and carriage were very noble."

The Ambassador then made his "three *congées*" or obeisances, kissed the Queen's hand and ceremoniously presented his credentials. "She took them with

great civility and read their superscription but did not open them."

After a pause Whitelocke began a set speech to the Queen in English, an interpreter translating into French every sentence as uttered, as was "the constant practice of that Court":

"The Queen was very attentive whilst he spake, and coming up close to him, by her looks and gestures (as we supposed) would have daunted him; but those who have been conversant in the late great affairs in England are not so soon as others appalled with the presence of a young lady and her servants. At the time of speaking, both the Queen and Whitelocke were uncovered; and whensoever he in his speech had occasion to use ceremony, the Queen answered it with her courtesy."

It was a carefully worded speech of some length, and the delivery of it in the two languages must have taken nearly half an hour, one imagines. Those "looks and gestures" of the young Queen which were to daunt the speaker may have been in answer to the somewhat defiant and challenging note struck at the beginning of the second sentence, which ran as follows:

"And although the Commonwealth of England are not encouraged to send abroad, when they reflect upon the barbarous usage of their messengers in some places,[1] yet Your Majesty perceives that from your Government neither our masters nor their servants have the least suspicion of any such entertainment; but we who are here do gratefully acknowledge our experience of respect and civility to our nation."

[1] Dr. Isaac Dorislaus and Anthony Ascham, sent by Cromwell to Holland and Spain respectively in 1849 and 1850, had been assassinated, the former by a party of masked Cavaliers. Both men had taken an active part in the trial of Charles I, whereas Whitelocke had not.

To Christina the passage in the speech which will have been most pleasant hearing was a comparison between her own reign and "those blessed days of our virgin Queen Elizabeth, under whom, above forty years, the people enjoyed all protection and justice from their Prince, and she all obedience and affection from her people".

After the Ambassador had finished, the Queen stood silent for a few minutes. Then "stepping near unto him, with a countenance and gesture full of confidence, spirit and majesty, yet mixed with great civility and a good grace, she answered Whitelocke presently in the Swedish language; and every sentence, as she spake it, was interpreted in Latin" . . . .

The Queen's speech, a purely ceremonial utterance, included regrets that it had not been practicable to welcome the Ambassador in a more convenient place both for herself and for him—by which, of course, she meant Stockholm; and after it was over the Queen apologized for her costume. She had been ill, she explained, "which caused her to put herself into the dress of her chamber, in which she chose to appear thus publicly, rather than to disappoint him of the time of his audience", and, in conclusion, she expressed the hope that "they should have opportunity and time sufficient to discourse at large together".

Thus began, as we shall see, a really curious and memorable friendship.

Whitelocke spent Christmas Eve pondering over the character of the Court and the personalities of the men and women with whom he would now be consorting, especially the diplomatic representatives of the other countries—people whose sympathies were to be won or whose hostile machinations were to be opposed.

He mentions, among others, "Woolfeldt, a Danish refugee, of great abilities and alliance", on whose succour he might perhaps count . . . ; the Dutch Resident, with whom he could have no converse personally, "their superiors being in open war"; the Spanish Ambassador, Piementelle,[1] whom he was to find "a gentleman of excellent parts and ingenuity, and in very great favour with the Queen", etc. Among the courtiers those whose good will was most to be desired were Greve Tott, "the Queen's favourite, a gallant young gentleman, and full of civility to Whitelocke";[2] Greve Erik Oxenstiern, the Chancellor's son; and the great Chancellor himself, not yet come to Upsala.

The next audience with the Queen took place two days later. The conversation this time is in French. As soon as she can, Queen Christina gets on the subject of Cromwell; Condé, with whom she compares him, had long been her ideal hero. "Your General," she says to Whitelocke, "hath done the greatest things of any man in the world; the Prince of Condé is next to him, but short of him." And she plies her visitor with questions about Cromwell's methods and those of his men. "Is it really true," she asks, "that many officers of his army not only pray themselves, but preach to their soldiers?"

[1] So Whitelocke spells the name always.

[2] Count Klas Tott was a Swede, whereas most of the Queen's "favourites" had been foreigners. Her decriers are apt to speak of several of them as though they were her lovers. M. Emile Boutroux, in the "Cambridge Modern History", vol. iv, p. 787, speaks of "her lover, Monaldeschi", and one finds it asserted that the Swedes "lamented her unchastity". Mr. Bain, in the biography already cited, declares that there is "not the shadow of a basis" for any of the imputations on her in this respect, and he warns readers particularly against the unfounded charges brought against her by contemporary French writers. Ranke ignores these charges altogether.

"Yes, madam," replies Whitelocke, "it is very true"; and he goes on to describe with unction and fervour how, while "their enemies are swearing or debauching or pillaging, the officers and soldiers of the Parliament's army used to be encouraging and exhorting one another out of the word of God"; how he himself is wont to admonish and speak to his own people when there is cause, although he has a chaplain attached to his suite. "It is the opinion of many good men with us," he declares, "that a long cassock with a silk girdle and a great beard do not make a learned or good preacher without gifts of the spirit of God and labouring in his vineyard"; and he contrasts this wise attitude with the position taken up by "the Popish prelates, who by no means would admit lay-people, as they call them", into the ranks of preachers.

"Methinks you preach very well," Queen Christina interposes smilingly at this point, "and have now made a good sermon. I assure you I like it very well."

And Whitelocke proceeds to assure her that the English have learnt this way of praying and preaching themselves "from a near friend of Her Majesty's, whose memory all the Protestant interest hath cause to honour".

A friend of hers? The Queen is puzzled.

"It was your father," Whitelocke explains—"your father, the great King Gustavus Adolphus, who upon his first landing in Germany, as many then present have testified, did himself in person, upon the shore, on his knees, give thanks to God for his safe landing, and before his soldiers himself prayed to God for his blessing upon that undertaking."[1]

[1] Ranke's one serious complaint against Queen Christina is that she was unfilial and had no reverence for her father's memory. This defect in her character evidently did not come out in her talks with Whitelocke.

That first audience lasted more than two hours—longer than suited the Ambassador, for Queen Christina made him walk up and down the room all the while, and his bad leg hurt him afterwards, "yet at the time in discourse with such a Princess and upon such high matters (like a wounded man when he is hot), he felt not the pain".

Whitelocke was in high favour, evidently, with the Queen from the very beginning. She confides in him very openly in regard to everything except religion—a big exception, and an exception as to which the Ambassador had no misgivings; he thinks her a little lax in countenancing the breaches of the Sabbath, which he finds all too glaring at Upsala, but he has no suspicion that she is no longer—in fact, has never been—at heart a Lutheran. Her seeming candour impresses him so much that he resolves, in return, to deal as frankly as possible with her in respect to the treaty which it is his business to negotiate. "Perhaps he would have done better with the Dutch or other people to have proceeded by degrees," we find him reflecting in his Diary, "and not to have bid so much at first; but with this Queen he thought this frank way would be the best. And it proved so; for she was pleased after this to say to some in private that the English Ambassador had dealt with her, not as a merchant, but as a gentleman and as a man of honour, and that he should fare the better for it". Perhaps among the people with whom the Queen had been discussing him were Lady Jane Ruthven and certain other of her ladies whom Whitelocke, as he tells us later, "took occasion sometimes to visit and to discourse with them in drollery, yet of such matters as he was willing should come to the Queen's ear, and he knew the ladies would

not fail to relate to Her Majesty; and this he found they did, and not to the disadvantage of him or his business, through the good opinion which his civility had gained them".

On 5th January the Queen and Ambassador had a particularly interesting talk. It was on this occasion that Queen Christina drew a comparison which has impressed many historians and biographers, among them the late Lord Morley.[1] She had been questioning Whitelocke about Cromwell's parentage and marriage. Here is the bit of dialogue:

QUEEN: "Much of the story of your General hath some parallel with that of my ancestor, Gustavus the First, who, from a private gentleman of a noble family, was advanced to the title of Marshal of Sweden, because he had risen up and rescued his country from the bondage and oppression which the King of Denmark had put upon them and expelled the King; and for his reward he was at last elected King of Sweden, and I believe that your General will be King of England in conclusion."

WHITELOCKE: "Pardon me, madam; that cannot be, because England is resolved into a commonwealth; and my General hath already sufficient power and greatness as General of all their forces, both by sea and land, which may content him."

QUEEN: "Resolve what you will, I believe he resolves to be King; and hardly any power or greatness be called sufficient when the nature of man is so prone, as in these days, to all ambition."

Just a week later came the news that the English Parliament had been dissolved and that Cromwell had become "Protector and Supreme Governor"! Whitelocke heard the announcement first from the

[1] He cites the passage in his book on Cromwell.

Queen, who made it to him "with much seeming joy", and who entirely approved of the new move.[1] She went on to tell him "under secrecy" that the great Oxenstiern had aspired to a similar position in Sweden when she was quite young, but had not been able to attain it.

A few days earlier Whitelocke had received a visit from the venerable Swedish Chancellor, the most experienced and most distinguished statesman in all Europe at that time. He is thus described for us in the Diary:

"He was a tall, proper, straight, handsome old man of the age of seventy-one years; his habit was black cloth, a close coat lined with fur, a velvet cap on his head furred, and no hat, a cloak, his hair grey, his beard broad and long, his countenance sober and fixed, and his carriage grave and civil."

At last, on 21st January, came the Queen's confidential announcement that she intended to abdicate. Whitelocke had been admitted to her bedchamber, "where two stools were set. The Queen sat down and caused Whitelocke to sit by her". After some preliminary conversation about the proposed treaty, Queen Christina "drew her stool close to Whitelocke" and said:

"I shall surprise you with something which I intend to communicate to you; but it must be under secrecy."

"Madam," answered Whitelocke, "we that have been versed in the affairs of England do not use to be surprised with the discourse of a young lady. Whatsoever Your Majesty shall think fit to impart to me and command to be under secrecy shall be faithfully obeyed by me."

[1] Whitelocke does not seem to have fully realized how much the success of his mission depended upon this event. The Queen and the Chancellor had up to this point been procrastinating in regard to the treaty. Feeling now that Cromwell's position was secure, they proceeded much more swiftly with the rest of the negotiations.

And the Queen proceeds to impart her news to him. She has it in her thoughts and resolution, she says, "to quit the Crown of Sweden" and to retire unto a private life, thus attaining more contentment of mind and freeing herself from "the great cares and troubles" attending upon her position as sovereign.

Whitelocke can scarcely believe his ears! He protests that the Queen must be "drolling" with him; and when at last she convinces him of her sincerity, he entreats her to defer her resolution or to put it aside altogether.

In answer to his remonstrations she says: "I take your plainness in very good part, and desire you to use freedom with me in this matter. The reasons which conduct me to such a resolution are because I am a woman and therefore the more unfit to govern and subject to the greater inconveniences; that the heavy cares of government do outweigh the glories and pleasures of it, and are not to be embraced in comparison of that contentment which a private retirement brings with it."

And she goes on to tell the Ambassador how, with this decision of hers in view, she had caused her cousin, the Prince Palatine, "a person of excellent parts and abilities for government", to be declared her successor some years earlier. "He being more active and fit for government than I am," she adds, "the sooner he is put into it the better."

"The better for him indeed," replies Whitelocke with emphasis, and proceeds: "With Your Majesty's leave I shall tell you a story of an old English gentleman who had an active young man to his son that persuaded the father to give up the management of the estate to the son, who could make greater advantage by it than his father did. He consented; writings were

prepared, and friends met to see the agreement executed to quit all to the son, reserving only a pension to the father. Whilst this was doing the father, as is much used, was taking tobacco in the better room, the parlour, where his rheum caused him to spit much, which offended the son ; and because there was much company he desired his father to take the tobacco in the kitchen and to spit there, which he obeyed. All things being ready, the son calls his father to come and seal the writings. The father said his mind was changed. The son wondered at it, and asking the reason, the wise old man said the reason was because he was resolved to spit in the parlour as long as he lived ; and so I hope will a wise young lady."

QUEEN : "Your story is very apt to our purpose and the application proper, to keep the crown upon my head as long as I live ; but to be quit of it rather than to keep it, I shall think to be to spit in the parlour."

To which Whitelocke replied that what Her Majesty liked best was best for her, but that Charles V, whose abdication had been motived by similar hopes, had repented it immediately. The Ambassador went on to urge that the Queen should at least exercise careful forethought for her future, keeping possession of those portions of the kingdom out of which her revenue should be issued, "for when money is to be paid out of a prince's treasury, it is not always ready and certain". This was, of course, a very sage piece of advice. Perhaps it was a very costly one to Sweden, for although the Queen was so shrewd and so clever, she might not of her own motion have taken such elaborate precautions for the safeguarding of her own income as she now proceeded to think out.

We have heard Chanut's list of the Queen's lan-

guages. Now, having so efficient and congenial a teacher at hand in Whitelocke, she determines to learn English also, and the Ambassador falls in very readily with her whim, extemporizing with the help of one of his chaplains an English grammar specially for her benefit. We do not hear how she progresses in her new studies, and in recording what she says Whitelocke seldom tells whether she has spoken in English or French or Latin. In the passage that follows, in which he describes an evening at the Court, one wonders whether we are given the Queen's *ipsissima verba*:

"In the evening Whitelocke went again to Court, as the Queen had invited him, and was brought into her bedchamber to hear Her Majesty's music, which was very rare and performed by divers Italian eunuchs and others. . . . The Queen was in a very good humour, and taking Whitelocke by the hand she led him to a lady in the room whom they called 'la belle Comtesse' (the fair Countess), the wife of Greve Jacob de la Gardie. The Queen said to Whitelocke: 'Discourse with this lady, my bedfellow, and tell me if her inside be not as beautiful as her outside'. Whitelocke, discoursing with her, found it so, and great modesty, virtue and wit accompanying her excellent beauty and behaviour. The Queen pulled off the Countess's gloves and gave one of them to Whitelocke for a favour; the other she tore in four pieces and distributed them to Piementelle, to the Italians, and to Greve Tott. In recompense of the glove Whitelocke sent to the 'belle Comtesse' a dozen pairs of English white gloves, which are in much esteem in this country."

The Queen and the Ambassador are by this time meeting very frequently; now he is taking the air with her on horseback; now they are at a window

of the castle comparing pistols, the Queen herself discharging Whitelocke's pistol as well as her own to see which is best; now they are discussing books, Whitelocke inquiring whether she has seen a book lately written in Latin by one Milton, an Englishman—perhaps the "Defensio pro Populo Anglicano"—and how she liked the style, and Christina commending "the matter of part of it and the language".

The Queen's intention to "quit the Crown" was now becoming known, and from this point onwards, of course, it became the one great outstanding topic at Upsala. Whitelocke discusses the subject next day with Piementelle and certain Italian noblemen at the Court. Had they heard of any discontent between her and her people or great men? What could cause her "to take such a resolution, so destructive to her good and power"? They answered "that no prince in the world had the people, great men and officers in more entire obedience and affection than the Queen had all her subjects of every degree (whereof Whitelocke was also an eye-witness), and that it was only her desire of retirement which brought her into this resolution".

Presently Whitelocke was to find that his warning to Queen Christina about ensuring her future had borne fruit of a kind that might prove distasteful and disturbing to himself. It seems that she had excogitated "a secret article" between her and the Protector, one which was not to be incorporated in the treaty signed by Whitelocke and the Commissioners, and of which the Commissioners were to know nothing—an article by which it should be agreed "that in case those here [i.e. in Sweden] should not perform what

they promised to her upon her resignation of the government, that then it should be in the power of the Protector to break the treaty now made and not to be bound by it ".

This, as we can well imagine, threatened to land the Ambassador in a very awkward predicament. If he were to reject the suggestion summarily the Queen would take umbrage and the treaty might not be signed at all; " and to consent to it he had no commission, nor held it reasonable ". On the other hand, the little piece of duplicity was double-edged. " He saw advantage to the Protector to have it put into his power to break the treaty "—should it seem desirable. On reflection, however, " he doubted the honour and cleanness of it ", and he was relieved eventually when he succeeded in persuading the Queen that what she wished was impracticable, and that " it might turn to her prejudice ".

On 20th February, Valentine's Eve according to the old style, Queen Christina had " done Whitelocke the honour to be his Valentine and to give him leave to wear her name in his hat ", and he, " according to the English custom of presenting their Valentines ", had sent the Queen a very large and handsome looking-glass, " worth a hundred pounds ", which he had brought with him from London and which she had been pleased to accept. Towards the end of April the Ambassador suggested to her a somewhat similar diversion. In his wonted manner, he records for us the quaint words in which the proposal was submitted and accepted. It came as a studied surprise. The talk up to this point had been about various other matters, including a question of some clothes which Queen Christina had been expecting from London:

WHITELOCKE: "Will Your Majesty be pleased on Monday next to go into England?"

THE QUEEN: "Hardly so soon; yet perhaps I may one day see England. But what is your meaning in this?"

WHITELOCKE: "Madam, Monday is the first day of May, a great day in England; we call it May-day, when the gentlemen use to wait upon their mistresses abroad to bid the spring welcome and to have some collation or entertainment for them. Now Your Majesty, being my mistress, if you will do me the honour that, after the custom of England, I may wait on you on May-day and have a little treatment for you after the manner of England; this I call going into England, and shall take it as a very great favour from your Majesty."

THE QUEEN: "If this be your meaning of going into England, I shall be very willing, as your mistress, to go with you on Monday next and to see the English mode."

The weather was very cold, but Queen Christina came in due course to the Ambassador's May-day celebration, accompanied by Greve Tott, Woolfeldt, the Danish refugee, and five of her ladies. "Whitelocke brought them to his collation, which he had commanded his servants to prepare in the best manner they could, and altogether after the English fashion." At a table in one room sat the Queen, with "la belle Comtesse" and the Countess Gabrielle Oxenstiern, and Whitelocke, Woolfeldt and Count Tott; the rest of the party were in another room. "Their meat was such fowl as could be gotten, dressed after the English fashion and with English sauces, creams, puddings, custards, tarts, tansies, English apples, *bon chrétien* pears, cheese, butter, neats' tongues, potted venison and sweetmeats brought out of England as his sack and claret also

was. His beer was also brewed and his bread made by his own servants in his house, after the English manner; and the Queen and her company seemed highly pleased with the treatment. Some of her company said she did eat and drink more at it than she used to do in three or four days at her own table."

The Queen, Whitelocke goes on to say, asked many searching questions which gave evidence of her own "good housewifery", and throughout the entertainment, "both in supper-time and afterwards", she was full of pleasantness and gaiety of spirit. "Among other frolics, she commanded Whitelocke to teach her ladies the English salutation, which, after some pretty defences, their lips obeyed and Whitelocke most readily. She highly commended Whitelocke's music of the trumpets, which sounded all supper-time; and her discourse was all of mirth and drollery, wherein Whitelocke endeavoured to answer her and the rest of the company did their parts."

This festivity we may regard as the climax to Bulstrode Whitelocke's period of residence at Queen Christina's Court. Eleven days later he was to assist at a function infinitely more striking and important, the Queen's formal abdication of the Crown, but he assisted at it more in the character of a spectator. In Upsala, on 28th April, the treaty between England and Sweden had been signed: with that signature the purpose of the Ambassador's mission was accomplished. It remained for him only to say farewell, and the merely ceremonial leave-takings were of no great interest or account. When, in later years, Lord Commissioner Whitelocke sat in his own home ruminating over his Swedish Embassy, one imagines that his thoughts will have lingered oftenest upon those May-day merry-makings in honour of the Queen.

CHAPTER XII

PORJUS AND KIRUNA

PORJUS—I wonder how many English-speaking men and women know the name? Not one in a million probably. I myself, although an occasional visitor to Sweden since 1912, had never even heard of the place until last September, yet by reason of the great electric power-station erected there during the years 1911–1914 it has become one of the "sights" of Scandinavia. It is the heart of one of the most noteworthy industrial districts of the modern world—a district which until the middle nineties of last century was almost entirely undeveloped. For Porjus, and the mining towns of Kiruna and Gällivare hard by, are situated in the northern part of Swedish Lapland. Down to thirty or forty years ago it was a bit of an adventure to penetrate so far north—an adventure seldom undertaken except by leisurely and wealthy persons curious to see something of the Lapps.

The little Lapps are still there, attired in their picturesque national costume, serviceable coats made of blue cloth ornamented with red and yellow borders, knee-breeches and high, pointed caps with bright red tufts to them. Their habits of existence have changed scarcely at all. They still live in their makeshift tents and huts, flitting about from place to place to find grazing for their reindeer. They are very con-

servative, and in very few of their huts will you see even a pane of glass. The ordinary tourist comes into touch with them hardly at all, though one sees groups of them occasionally loitering at the railway stations. Very quaint, picturesque-looking little folk they are, grim and glum normally, but responding at once to any sign of friendliness. At one station I waved my hand to such a group, and they all waved their hands back to me most gleefully. They looked as much amused and pleased as though I were a Punch and Judy show.

The Lapps themselves, however, have to take a back seat nowadays among the attractions of their country. Lapland, for the ordinary run of present-day travellers in Sweden, is primarily "Midnight Sun" land, for the Swedish Touring Association has established a really delightful hotel at Abisko, an exquisitely situated spot, overlooking a big lake called Torneträsk; and this hotel is crowded for two months or so every year by visitors who journey thither for the express purpose of witnessing that midsummer marvel. There is also a kind of late winter Abisko "season" about Easter, before the snow melts. The train journey from Stockholm is one of more than a thousand miles, but it is an excellent service. You pass through a region of rivers, hills and forests, and the restaurant-cars and sleeping-berths are very comfortable, so the thirty-six hours pass swiftly and pleasantly.

The exceptional traveller is apt to be a painter, or a naturalist, or an architect, or an engineer. Kiruna, the remarkable little town of 12,000 inhabitants which has sprung up at the foot of the iron mountain of Kirunavaara within the last two decades, is quite an exhibition of modern architectural art and engineering science. Its spacious church, erected in a

A SUMMER VIEW IN LAPLAND

commanding position, is one of the most curious edifices in Sweden. It is built of pine wood, and may be described as a kind of fantastic elaboration and glorification of a Lapp dwelling. One of Sweden's greatest sculptors has had a hand in decorating its exterior, and Prince Eugene, King Gustav's brother, an artist of individuality and distinction, has contributed the altar-painting. Kiruna is, of course, first and last a mining town, a town for working men, and nowhere in all Europe or America, I imagine, can there be a working community whose needs have been provided for with more thought and care and resourcefulness. The houses, mostly of wood and (as already implied) varying to an astonishing extent in shape and style, are admirably built, and their occupants have all kinds of modern conveniences, from electric vacuum-cleaners down to electric tea-kettles.

Kiruna, in fact, is the last word in the modern and the practical. It has a wonderfully efficient technical school for boys and girls. The girls are taught everything a working girl can need to know and to do, from minding babies (there is an excellently arranged nursery with a dozen or so babies in it and a like number of demure-looking young nurses, all in their teens)—from minding babies to dressmaking and weaving and domestic science in all its branches—washing, scrubbing, cooking, preserving. The boys receive training in every description of handicraft they are likely to be able to take up. Only a limited number of them will secure employment, like their fathers, on the mine. Most of them will have to adopt some other kind of livelihood. Accordingly, we see them learning a score of different forms of manual work, and learning them in the most up-to-date possible manner. Whether as

tailors or blacksmiths or cabinet-makers or what not, these Kiruna boys are able before they are fifteen or sixteen to turn out articles which find a ready sale in the open market. The school reaps more than £2,000 a year from the fruits of their labour, and 50 per cent. of what is thus earned is credited to them in their saving-books. A splendid institution, this Kiruna school! Its headmaster, a quite young man, is proud of it, and he has every right to be. It is one of the very best things in Sweden.

Gällivare's evolution has been somewhat akin to that of Kiruna, but less sensationally swift, and it is a less picturesque place. Both towns, and the iron-ore mines to which they owe their birth, and the whole of the railway line (from Luleå, on the Gulf of Bothnia, up to Narvik, on the Norwegian coast) on which they lie are now dependent for their prosperity and very existence on the power-station at Porjus.

Early memories lent an additional charm to the little journey I was enabled to make with my wife over the thirty-five miles of railway from Gällivare to Porjus. Those early memories were of photographs of my father, a civil engineer in India, moving about on a trolley along the lines of the Bombay–Baroda and Central India Railway. It was not on a trolley, of course, that my wife and I travelled, but it was not a train either; it was a kind of motor-car on rails, with seating accommodation for two passengers and for a mechanician behind. The day was lovely and the journey was a delightful one, through virgin forest-land, slightly undulating, with patches here and there of bog and barren rocks. In fact, my wife, being a Swede and proud of the really splendid forests of her country, objects to the word "forest-land" as applied

THE HOTEL AT ABISKO

to this locality, for the patches of barrenness and of bog are frequent, and the trees are relatively sparse, with dwarf-birch predominating. Anyway, there were trees enough on both sides of the railway and on the lower slopes of the hills to lend the most gorgeous of hues to the landscape, varying from the darkest of green to the brightest of yellows and the richest of reds. We had been regretting a little that we had been too late to see the midnight sun, but all the wonders of that autumnal colouring were a compensation.

Porjus is on the south bank of the swiftly running Lule-älv, and the first thing to be done before making the power-station was to construct a dam across this river. The dam, in length 4,115 feet, in height 42 feet, had to be made immensely massive, so as to be able to resist the pressure of the masses of ice which come bearing down against it in the winter. In September, of course, the stream was at its lowest, and there was no great rush of water. It was strong enough merely to make an impressive cascade, and, having half-filled the big reservoir, to form into rapids and whirlpools as it spun down through its rocky bed in the direction of Harsprånget—" The Hare's Leap "—at which point it has grown always into a torrent and has reached its climax of force and beauty in what is perhaps the most magnificent waterfall in Northern Europe.

Alighting from our conveyance at a point close to the dam, and not far from a charming little hotel, we made our way on foot to the big building which constitutes the above-ground section of the power-works —a shapely, dignified-looking building worthy of the important rôle it plays in life. Entering this, and proceeding upstairs, we were allowed to penetrate into the big room containing the strange mechanical con-

trivances—miracles of science quite beyond my own comprehension—by which the whole work of the station is watched over and controlled. A very tall and lanky young man, somewhat languid in manner, but amiable and courteous, endeavoured to explain to us some of the devices and contrivances by which he could tell what amount of power was being used at any given moment at any specific point anywhere in the entire field of operation—a region more than 350 miles in length—almost as great, that is, as the distance from London to Edinburgh. It was strange to think that this quiet, unimpressive-looking young official, obviously intelligent and competent, but not, to all seeming, a man of any exceptional gifts, should be qualified to cope with a task so complicated and so responsible.

Next we were taken down into the bowels of the earth and were told how, in view of the rigour of the climate in those parts, it had been necessary to build the great machine-room at a depth of 165 feet below the surface of the gound. Reaching this room, which is 80 metres in length and 10 metres in width, we were shown the great turbines and generators.

The atmosphere in this great machine-room, or "generator hall", was inevitably close, and we speculated as to what would happen if the two men in charge of it were to grow tired and fall asleep at a moment when their attention might be needed. Apparently they are proof against somnolence, but one of them obligingly gave us an illustration of the kind of warning they are subject to when anything does go amiss—a series of overpowering alarms from a siren strident enough and violent enough to wake the dead!

For the benefit of any engineer readers, I may perhaps add a few details about the Luleå–Narvik

A LAPLAND LAKE

Railway, the longest electric railway in Europe and the most northerly in the world. I take these particulars from a Swedish official publication :

The contact conductor over the railway track is of the plain suspension-wire type, and is attached to the suspension wire at the point where the latter is supported and at from two to five places in between. The total span on straight, clear stretches of line is 52·5 metres. The conductor wire is made in separate sections of 1·4 kilometres length, kept taut by means of a weight at each end.

The rolling-stock consists of 4 express locomotives, 1 passenger locomotive, 33 ore-train locomotives, 12 goods and shunt locomotives, and 2 motor-cars—motor-cars of the type on which I travelled.

The ore trains are composed of either 30 or 40 trucks, averaging a total weight of 1,530 or 2,000 tons. The speed attained up the steepest gradients is 30–35 kilometres an hour.

Two insulators, each supporting a 6-millimetre steel wire, are fitted at the top of the contact-line poles. This wire is used to conduct 60-period a single-phase current of 10,000 volts tension to all the stations and certain other places along the railway. The current is transformed down at these places to 2 × 110 volts by means of small transmitters—generally of 3 kilowatts—which are hung up on the contact-line poles. Residents in the vicinity of the railway are in this way supplied with electric light and power.

CHAPTER XIII

HELSINGEGÅRDEN

FRÖKEN AGNES SUNDBERG'S SCHOOL FOR COUNTRY GIRLS, NEAR JERFSÖ, IN THE PROVINCE OF HELSINGLAND

JERFSÖ, Baedeker says, is "prettily situated", and it "is one of the chief places of Helsingland". That is all the English visitor to Sweden is likely to hear about it, but it has come to possess a more noteworthy and individual title to fame through the founding, in November, 1918, on a pleasant site some two miles from the station, of one of the most interesting educational establishments in all Scandinavia, a boarding-school for farmers' daughters, called "Helsingegården". For several decades past people have been given to talking of Denmark as the most practical and progressive land in Europe in regard to agriculture, but I question whether Denmark itself can boast of any institution in which the characters and capabilities of the working country-girl are so admirably cared for. Even in Sweden Helsingegården is not as famous as it ought to be, but that is only because its foundress and directress, Fröken Agnes Sundberg, has no desire for fame, and because, her house being always full, she has no need of "publicity". The excellence of her teaching methods and the happy

atmosphere of the household over which she presides have combined to make Helsingegården well known to the people who are concerned—that is enough. The list of the pupils who have gone through the training there includes names from every province in the kingdom.

I have called Helsingegården a school for farmers' daughters, but as we have nothing quite comparable with it in England, these four words will give little idea of its nature and scope. Its purpose is to give both practical and theoretical instruction in every branch of household economy and in all the various kinds of work which fall to the lot of farmers' wives and daughters in Sweden. Fröken Sundberg's ideal has been to " run " her school like a big, well-managed farm, with all the occupations, indoors and outdoors, systematically ordered. Every pupil takes her turn at every kind of work, and learns to accomplish it not only in the best possible way and with the least possible waste of time and energy, but also with zest and enjoyment. She is encouraged to think of the place just as though it were her own home and to regard herself as personally responsible for its comfort and welfare.

The furniture and equipment of the whole establishment are of a kind to make the girls appreciate the beauty and value of good workmanship, whether old or new, tables and chairs and cupboards of antique design being conspicuous in some of the rooms, while in the kitchens, pantries, etc.—all kept beautifully clean—much thought and ingenuity has been bestowed on labour-saving devices and appliances.

There are about twenty-four girls at the school, aged from about fifteen to eighteen. The training course takes five and a half months (two terms,

November–April and May–October), and it comprises cooking, baking, slaughtering, preserving, making butter and cheese, keeping a house in order, cleaning floors, dusting, laying a table, washing clothes, mangling, ironing, sewing, spinning, weaving, embroidering, looking after horses, cows, dogs, pigs, poultry, and finally gardening.

In addition to all this, the girls are trained in "first-aid" and hygiene and in the care of children, as well as in book-keeping and generally in almost everything calculated to make them into companionable human beings, good neighbours, good citizens and good wives.

As for recreation, Fröken Sundberg admits that the girls have not much time for that, any more than the ordinary housewife has; but as all the work of the house really is accomplished *con amore,* there is no great hankering after recreation in the sense of mere idleness. It is a recreation alike to the teaching staff and to the girls to have one of their number read aloud to them while they are sewing, and there are occasional hours devoted to music and singing. Now and again there is a half-holiday, now and again they have private theatricals. Their enjoyments are mostly of the same order as those which they might have in their own homes, but there is one which is peculiar to Helsingegården and to which they are likely to look back sometimes wistfully in the future—namely, the midday pause in their work, with its accompaniment of coffee-drinking and chorus-singing. This is the hour at which teachers and taught alike look their happiest. They are all assembled in a perfectly charming room, fashioned out of what was once a cow-stable. An enormous well-burnished coffee-pot stands on the hearth, in front of a roaring fire. The coffee is of

the very best, so are the cakes. There is a superabundance of cream, and the cups and saucers and plates are delightful to look at and to handle. Presently there is a lull in the lively talk; one of the teaching staff strikes a key on the piano, the girls stand up in two rows, and from the score or so of healthy young throats there issue forth the moving words of one or other of the best-loved songs of Sweden.

CHAPTER XIV

CARL LARSSON AND HIS SWEDISH HOME

To live in our Sweden,
  By meadow or vale,
By lake or by forest,
  By hill or by dale—

Yes, that's an existence!
  Yes, that is a life
To share with good comrades,
  With children and wife! [1]

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON and George du Maurier, and Randolph Caldecott and Kate Greenaway and J. M. Barrie (I am not yet used to his title)—these are among the people whom I would most like to see present were I showing a series of Carl Larsson's drawings upon the screen. The drawings would speak for themselves, and all the lecturer would have to do would be to translate the text belonging to them. I wish I could reproduce a score or so of them in this book and in colour. It seems an almost hopeless task to try and translate something of their happiness and brightness and Swedishness into printed words upon a page.

Carl Larsson was born in 1853 and began his artistic

[1] An almost word-for-word translation of the lines with which Carl Larsson concludes his introduction to his album of drawings entitled "A Home".

studies in Stockholm, but he liked to date his "real existence" from the moment in 1882 when he met his future wife, eighteen-year-old Karin Bergöö, at Grèz-par-Nemours in Normandy, where there was a little artists' colony, very much of the Latin Quarter type, but with a strong Swedish element in it. He had with him on the occasion of that meeting a comrade named Lundh, to whom he remarked on their way home afterwards—so he tells me—that it was a pity Fröken Bergöö had a nose like a potato. But by the time Lundh and he had reached their lodging he had realized that he was in love. His Karin's sweet, grave, gentle face, not without beauty, is now, by reason of his countless portraits of her, more familiar to her compatriots than the features of any other woman in history. He and she will go down to future ages side by side, like Rembrandt and his Saskia; and in their very different fashion and within the confines of their more restricted world they are not less assured of immortality.

In the winter of 1910 the great Stockholm publishing firm of Bonnier issued in the form of a Christmas gift-book the third of the big albums in which Carl Larsson gathered together some of the best and most characteristic of his pictures of his home and surroundings under the comprehensive title "Larsson's". He prefaces them with a few pages of autobiographical notes. To glance through this album, and through its companion volume, "A Home", is not merely to make friends with a personality of singular attractiveness, but to get any number of glimpses incidentally into the life of artistic Sweden.

We may skip the years from Carl Larsson's birth in 1853 (he was "still-born", he tells us, but "owing to careless handling of the little corpse" he came to

life) until his marriage in 1883. After the wedding, which took place in Stockholm, he and his bride returned to Grèz and settled down in a little dwelling in which had lived the brothers Goncourt, who had entertained there Millet and Corot and other famous members of the Barbizon school. The artists of the colony gave the young couple a great reception on their arrival. There was a banquet in their honour, followed by a dance and a concert, which included such appropriate items as "John Brown's body lay a-mouldering in the grave", sung by an Englishman named Coffin!

In this house was born their first child, Suzanne, the fat-cheeked baby whom we see with its mother in the pen-drawing entitled "Studio Idyll". Already then, Carl Larsson declares in his outspoken, intimate way, apropos of this drawing—already then, his Karin had a charm of her own, but she was not to be compared with the Karin of twenty years later!

In 1885 they returned to Sweden, first to Stockholm, then to Gothenburg, where Carl Larsson secured a post as master in an art school and where the invaluable patronage of the art-collector, Pontus Furstenberg, the great Mæcenas of that city, started him on the career which from this point onwards was to be so brilliantly successful. Presently, after fresh visits to Paris (where a second child was born—Pontus) and Stockholm, the painter and his little family moved to Sundborn, in Dalecarlia, which thenceforth was to be their home.

"Ett Hem"—"A Home"—the first of all the albums, was published in 1899, bound in blue and yellow, the Swedish colours. It is devoted entirely to the extraordinary happy home life led by the artist and his family at Sundborn during the years that followed. On the title-page we are shown the house,

A VERY TYPICAL CARL LARSSON DRAWING:
THE FAMILY BATHING PLACE

which at that date was a pleasant, roomy, two-story, reddish, wooden building, situated near a small river. On the tiled roof-top—to keep the chimneys company and to serve as decoration—is a black doggy gargoyle (or shall we say a black gargoyly dog), with its tongue out. In the foreground, a sturdy little figure in a cloak of red and wearing greenish snow-boots, stands a small daughter, Kersti, eyeing us roguishly. A pen-and-ink drawing, this title-page, done with as few lines as possible and quite crudely coloured, but admirably effective in its way.

The rest of the full-page illustrations are all from water-colours, twenty-five of them. Turning them over, we are made acquainted with almost every aspect of Dalecarlian life. A river scene first in the depth of winter—one of the rivers down which the logs of wood are sent floating from the forests to the great sawing-mills; then an old-fashioned wooden bridge and an old-fashioned couple, Carl Larsson's father and mother, driving over it in an old-fashioned country vehicle—a drawing a little reminiscent of some of Caldecott's; then a glimpse of the farmyard, followed by another and more elaborate picture of the house with, on this side of it, a riot of green foliage and red berries; and then a quite near view of its unpretentious entrance. A solemn-looking mastiff ("Kapo" his name is) is seated on the doorstep; his comfortable kennel is alongside the porch. Above the door one can make out the welcoming words:

Var välkommen, kära du,
Till Carl Larsson och hans fru![1]

[1] *Kära du*—literally "dear thou"—is an expression continually used in addressing relatives and intimate friends; it amounts sometimes to "my dear" or "dearest", sometimes to "dear old thing"; *hans fru*, of course, means "his wife"

After this we have a succession of "interiors". While all of them have touches of whimsical individuality, these rooms of Carl Larsson's home are at the same time in their main features *echt svensk*—typically and essentially Swedish. The look of beautiful cleanliness, the brightness of colouring, the blending of simplicity and solidity about the writing-tables and cupboards and sofas and tables and chairs, the strips of decoratively embroidered carpet on the well-swept wooden floors, the column-shaped porcelain stoves in the corners, reaching right up to the ceiling—all these things are almost exactly what you may see in ten thousand, fifty thousand—perhaps one might almost say a hundred thousand—other houses of well-to-do, cultured families up and down the kingdom. Carl Larsson, while an ardent lover and admirer of France, remained always an intensely patriotic Swede. He prided himself on the Swedishness of his home life, and it was a joy to him to think that he was setting a good example to his countrymen. He holds forth vehemently on the subject in his preface to this particular book, contrasting the vulgar and shoddy furniture just then so much in vogue—the output of the big manufactories—with the conscientious and tasteful products of the Swedish peasants in previous generations.

"Our peasants and their women, who used to sit and sew and weave in the winter evenings," he says, "allowed nothing to leave their hands until they had given it a touch of artistic feeling and of individuality.

"The embroidered tablecloths which sent out fragrance from the well-scoured, well-tooled, substantial table, the cosy bed-places within the walls, with their beautiful home-woven curtains, the stoutly made old chairs and benches handed down from generation to

generation, all seemed to admonish the race to value and maintain the same kind of genuineness and solidity. . . . And then their costumes! Just think what the Swedish peasant-folk looked like when, radiant with health and colour, they stood about in front of the church in the sunshine! . . . Why did they make such a delightful picture in those days, and why do they make such a hideous one now?

"Why, because they dressed then in keeping with our climate and allowed their own natures and needs to set their stamp on what they wore, whereas now it is thought 'the thing' to follow fashions from abroad —yesterday we got the fashions from Paris and Berlin, to-day we get them from England and America."

And he proceeds to urge his compatriots to revert to the older and better ways:

"A Swedish man almost ceases to be a Swedish man in proportion as he succeeds in becoming 'a fine gentleman'. And the same remark applies to you, my solid country Swedish woman.

"Therefore, friend Swede, save yourself in time! Become once again simple and dignified, be clumsy rather than elegant, put on your furs and your good thick garment of wool and leather, contrive to get the comfort which your thick body needs, and make a good display of the bold, strong colours—the gaudy colours, if you like—which are called for in contrast with the deep green of the pine groves and the cold white snow; and let your hand, as well it may, employ itself with the making and decorating of the things you need in your home. Then you will be happy in the consciousness of being yourself, and you shall live long upon the earth. Amen!"

It was not merely in regard to such things, however,

that Carl Larsson felt he was setting a good example, but also in his capacity as a happy paterfamilias.

"You have solved life's riddle!" a friend exclaimed to him after examining the series of joyous pictures contained in "Ett Hem", and in the preface he takes these words as a text. Addressing an imaginary bachelor reader, he indulges in a very characteristic disquisition, from which I shall quote at some length. Incidentally it amplifies our growing knowledge of Dalecarlia:

"Bachelor! your whole life is at stake! Take a ticket for Falun. There you shall be fetched by Johan and my tubby little mare. You will have a good look at our Dalaland, as it will be a drive of an hour and a quarter and through a constantly changing landscape. Johan will point out Sweden to you, the place where Swedenborg was born and where Linnæus and Sara Morea were married. If you are a man with an eye for such things, you will rejoice, as you fare up and down the long hilly roads, to see how well looked after the forests are and the healthy look of the oats. If you are responsive to Nature, you will peer in between the trees, and your soul will be filled with gladness at the sight of the richness of the soil and the soft greenness of the moss alongside the rills and streamlets that go dancing downwards between the clusters of whortleberries and all the flowering undergrowth of the woods. . . ."

The imaginary guest arrives and sits down to a "simple-life" dinner, consisting chiefly of a Dalecarlia dish called *flotmolja*, two chief ingredients of which are *knäckebröd* and goats' cheese, and along with which, as a relish, one eats either salted herring or the little sprat-like fish called *strömming*. Presently

Carl Larsson tires of his "bachelor" and allows him to "slink away"; and it is, as usual, to the world at large that he proceeds to open out at once the treasures of his home and the joys of his heart.

"Ett Hem" was produced as a Christmas gift-book, and naturally there is a Christmassy atmosphere about some of the pictures in it, but it contains as many summer scenes as winter scenes, and one's main impression is of a home in which the sun always shines. The studio scenes, of course, are the ones which reflect most strongly the temperament and tastes of its owner, with their pleasant medley of the serious and old and the lighthearted and new—a stately old oak cabinet dated 1694 standing alongside a bright red sofa dated 1890, which was fashioned unmistakably to Carl Larsson's own design; one of its supports springs up into a pillar eight or nine feet high, on the top of which is perched a comical little wooden figure, also of the artist's own designing. This pillar is in reality an ingeniously contrived cabinet, with a series of compartments inside it in which Carl Larsson kept his colours.

Along the top of one of the walls of the studio there extends a frieze depicting scenes from the life of Christ—a piece of eighteenth-century work executed by a peasant from the province of Halland. All the personages in it except Christ himself are represented in the Swedish costumes of that period. "They have the same primitive *naïveté* as the frescoes of Giotto," Carl Larsson says of them, "and they interest me more"; and he proceeds:

"It was with those Swedish peasant painters from the end of the eighteenth century that I went to school: I declare that openly. Think of all those

old paintings you see in the peasants' dwellings here in Dalarna and in Norrland! What deep and serious feeling there is in them, together with broad but genuine humour! And what a racial sense of style! For me they constitute a greater and richer wealth than the mines of Gallevara can ever yield to others."

On the central panel of the door is one of his portraits of his wife, Karin. In another picture, entitled "Sunday", in the album called "Larssons", Karin is sitting on the red sofa, concealed from us by that tall pillar save for her apron and her hands folded in front of her. She is sitting there, resting for a moment, lost in thought. Thinking of what? Perhaps of the flight of time—it is ten years since that panel portrait was painted, twenty years since she first saw her husband and since he first made her laugh! . . . A woman who saw this picture when it was exhibited at Stockholm was impelled to sit down and write a letter to the artist expressing the delight it gave her. She had returned home, she told him, so full of his "beautiful, beautiful picture" that she must thank him for the joy and gladness it had given her. "I love it," she went on, "and I would like to kiss those clasped hands now resting on the table after their week of devoted work for all in the home—after mending holes both in stockings and in hearts, drying of young eyes and being a source of grace and help to all her dear ones."

It was a letter worth receiving. "The very first time I met the woman who wrote it," Carl Larsson tells us, "I kissed *her* hands. That is the way to look at pictures—at least, that is the way to look at mine!"

The children, of course, are very prominent in the

pictures, awake or asleep, undressed or dressing, working, playing, skating, bathing, fishing. The catching and, above all, the eating of crayfish are two of the outstanding enjoyments of Sweden of all ages. Look at the preparations for a crayfish supper. As soon as the coffee is ready they will all sit down to it and call out to Pappa to join them. There is *schnapps* for him in the glass decanter with the stopper designed like an owl—to the normal Swedish male a glass of *schnapps* with such a meal is indispensable.

On the last page of all we are shown the little village church, its walls covered with red tiles, a vivacious weather-cock on the top of the toy-like steeple of its bell-tower. In the foreground is the tiny graveyard wherein, one day or another, some or all the members of the happy family will sorrowfully be laid to rest.

CHAPTER XV

FROM STOCKHOLM TO VADSTENA BY THE GOTHA CANAL

By KARIN LILJA WHYTE

WHEN we left Stockholm on the Gotha Canal boat there was the usual stir of passengers and goods on the quay and decks. It was a lovely morning, and Stockholm looked its most beautiful, all sun-glittering, short, laughing waves and gay little cotton-woolly clouds on a joyful blue sky. On one side of the boat a young man was sketching the *Stadshus*, with light craft moving to and fro on the water in between. We looked at his sketch afterwards, and it was caught like a seagull on the wing. There were plenty of young men, who were to be our fellow-passengers, and we could not quite make out their sadness at parting from their friends; they were so particularly looking like foreign tourists. Three young men near us were saying good-bye to two girls in the white student caps. Very unlike Swedish habits, these boys kissed the girls' hands, and there was shyness as well as a little moisture in two pairs of blue eyes at this public demonstration. When the boat began to move, there was no time for anything but the view. The *Stadshus* looked like the concentration of the Queen of the Mälar, so colour-lively opposite the dark grey forms of Södra Bergen on the other side of the Lake

Mälar. Little houses and old-fashioned small gardens outline the tops of these watchful old giants, who seem to cast disdainful glances at the modern mansions across. And still these modern houses have been chosen by wise people who love the sun and the gay ripple of the water; wise, also, because, since all the scaffoldings and mortar revealed the dignified proportions of the *Stadshus*, this part of the town is nicer almost than any other.

Thus we sailed on, the town slowly disappearing and country houses beginning to appear, while still the new church of Höganlid was clearly visible on the summit of the grey giants, and at last we see only dark green headlands and points with boathouses and bathing-huts and yellow or red painted cottages, with here and there a bigger house. Restful is this scenery and restful the motion of the boat. Fancy being on a boat in quiet security! We begin to be a little curious again. Why are all these young foreigners here, and why do they seem so familiar with everything? We begin to talk with the young man who sketched the Town Hall. He tells us that they have all been the guests of a certain Swedish seaside town, and that they are Austrian students. He himself is studying architecture in Vienna and is very interested in the new Town Hall, and also full of excitement over all the fun they have had, all the friends they have made; and his pretty little sister spoke English with us, and told us how she had been in Cambridge with an English professor's family, and how charming they were, and never forgot to write, and how she was now studying English to become a teacher in Austria some day. There were also some Americans, very quiet, very reticent compared with the exuberance of these young Southerners. Fascinating is this trip,

sitting on deck, while the landscape takes quiet flight on each side and point disappears behind point. At a distance we see Drottmigholm, where the royal family spends a lot of its time, getting there quite quickly by motor-car nowadays, while in the old days the sea was the quickest route.

If you can avoid taking an interest in your fellow-passengers, you drift along, and when the lunch bell goes you are ready for the very excellent food that is served by solemn-looking young women who seem to regard a smile as utterly out of place; but, thanks to the good food, the gliding landscape and the sun-kissed waves, you feel indeed thankful to be alive. But if you can't help being interested in the others, you feel that you *must* know why there is a sudden scream of joy when we reach the first landing-place and you *must* go across and watch the next events! All the fourteen young Austrians seem anxious to throw themselves overboard and fetch their unexpectedly appearing friends. They had come by automobile, and intended going on board to do a bit of the road with their departing friends, and their happiness was good to watch until the moment of parting came, with tears and signs of grief in young faces. You could not help wondering what life would be like when these young people should meet again.

So far we had only been through a short canal made by the hand of man, but we knew that by the next morning we would have reached far beyond the entrance into the county of Östergötland, where the canal passes right through. The idea to make this waterway through Sweden was conceived as far back as the beginning of the sixteenth century, but not until an energetic Minister of the Swedish Crown, Baltzar von Platen, began to work for the fulfilment

of these plans, and strove intensely hard to get the money, did at last the great idea mature. Only in 1832 was the whole mighty line inaugurated. It is interesting to English people that the said Baltzar von Platen called in an English expert, Thomas Telford, to plan the route, and he came to practically the same results as the Swedish experts.

Östergötland is historically a very interesting county, where there are visible memories of many of the great of Sweden, whose names have travelled far outside her own frontiers. Here was the family seat of the mighty Birger Jarl, who ruled Sweden in the thirteenth century, while the weak king was wise enough to take his counsel. He will always be remembered for his laws still in existence, the so-called peace laws: peace for the home, peace for women, and peace for the Ting (Parliament), and he made the law that the woman should inherit half with her brother. And there is the beautiful romance of Birger Jarl's brother, Doomsman [1] Bengt, who fell in love with and married the beautiful Sigrid the Fair, a lady of lower birth. As a wedding present, the Jarl (or Earl) sent a beautiful brocade dress, but inset was a breadth of plain homespun. Bengt had this worked in with pearls and real stones, and the Jarl was much displeased, and came with his suite to the brother's home, Ulfåsa, to give his verdict against the young wife and scold the brother. Sigrid heard in time of this visit, pleaded with her husband to go out into the woods and let her alone receive the wrathful Jarl. The latter was well received, but showed no sign of relenting. Rude was he and scolding, and at last she turned to him and said if he did not consider her a worthy wife of one of the mighty Folkunga family, would he not take his father's

[1] The old name for a judge.

sword (handing him the sword, which she took down from the wall) and thrust it into her? He was entirely overcome by so much beauty, grace and courage, and pronounced the much-repeated sentence: "Had my brother not done this, I might have done it myself."

At the above-mentioned Ulfåsa lived for a time, nearly a hundred years later, St. Bridget, or, as we call her, St. Birgitta, with her husband, who was also "doomsman".

Alvastra, also in Östergötland, was the monastery which, after a pilgrimage to Compostella in Spain, Birgitta's husband entered and in which he ultimately died, and it was here that Birgitta dictated the rules for the famous convent in Vadstena, which was to have both nuns and monks, though in separate buildings. But the building was not finished until after her death, and her daughter, Katarina, was the first abbess. This convent became very rich, and at the time of the Reformation Gustavus Vasa withdrew most of its worldly goods.

Again, the stones from the monastery of Alvastra were used wherewith to build the Renaissance palace of Vadstena, where for a time in the sixteenth century Gustavus Vasa lived with his numerous family; and it was here that his son Magnus, in madness, drawn by the lure of a little mermaid, threw himself from a window down into the depths of Lake Vetter.

The boat lands right in front of this magnificent castle, and if you are in luck you will get there in time for the sunset, which makes the old grey walls radiant with colour, the water and the sky one mass of tints, and you will ask yourself whether by some mistake you have not arrived in an eastern fairyland instead of at an inland seaport in sober old Scandinavia.

Vadstena has, since the time of the convent of

THE CASTLE, VADSTENA

St. Birgitta, been famous for its lace industry, the finest and most renowned in Sweden. It is no longer a town of any importance, but it has a history which compares favourably with any town in the whole of the country. Here ended the peaceful revolution of Engelbrecht, who in 1434 forced the governing body to send in their letter of resignation to King Erik, who, because of the union of the Scandinavian countries, lived in Denmark, and whose Danish bailiffs drained the peasants for their own gain. And here Gustavus Vasa, after his strenuous campaign against the Danish king, was proclaimed Regent at a Riksdag meeting in 1521. This is all interesting history, and when, after the long, delightful journey through Östergötland, you arrive at Vadstena, you feel very much inclined to wait over until the next steamer and roam about on the shores of Lake Vetter and live again in the history of the Middle Ages, so full of romance and pulsating life. Both to-day and for centuries back this lake has been the means of communication, and there are many ruins to tell where the rich and the mighty chose their dwellings. In the middle of the lake is, for instance, on an island, the old ruin of Visingsborg, built by the father of the beautiful Ebba Brahe, the love of Gustavus Adolphus. His severe mother would not allow this union, but in the archives are still kept their exchange of love-letters, and there is every reason to believe that she would have made a queen as good as anyone, knowing as we do to-day the high repute of the famous Brahe family. She married in 1618 one of Gustavus Adolphus' generals, and in the old church in Visingsö is still to be seen her golden bridal crown, which until this day is lent to the brides of the island.

CHAPTER XVI

IN DALECARLIA

By KARIN LILJA WHYTE

THE world is full of beautiful places, but the region of Dalecarlia combines in a strange, fascinating way the lure of the past with the beauty of the present. To know the history of a country, however superficially, is a tremendous help to the understanding of its beauty and towards getting drawn into its inner life. It may be a truism, all this, but try to live in Dalecarlia for a short time without knowing its past, then read up the old times, and you will see the difference as distinctly as when you travel in Holland knowing something of the fight of that sturdy race against the pressure of the Spaniard or the onslaughts of the greedy sea. A Swedish teacher who is fond of her little flaxen-haired listeners has a happy task when she is telling the story of Gustav Vasa's adventures in Dalecarlia. Eager, upturned faces long to hear more about the slender youth who had only one absorbing thought while he ran on his skis or hid in the forests or worked for his food at the homesteads along his route. His one idea was to save his country from the invaders, the Danes, very much as Alfred the Great had worked centuries before for the same purpose in England. Like Alfred, Gustav was to get the reward for his long and desperate toil, but not until things had looked their blackest. Long

is the story of the sacrifices of patriotic men and women who kept their calm when the young patriot was overtaken by his Danish pursuers. Still these strong and free peasants did not dare to take up his seemingly forlorn cause until one day when he, hopeless and bitterly sad, was feeling that his mission was lost; then some of the best of them realized what it meant, and from Mora, on the Lake of Siljan, came the message to support him. How the Swedish hearts swelled with pride when these patriots called their brothers from all around to take up arms, and the message was sent on and on to the next village and the next, and from Dalecarlia there came at last the stalwart men who had deliberated long, but who would hear of no turning back when their young chief led them on to victory. When you travel by rail through these endless forests, you just wonder how that improvised army fed itself as it came along upon the rough roads, and it dawns upon you that what the history tells—"They fed on bread and water, and when the corn was scarce they mixed it with the bark of the trees"—must be true.

There are still to be found in these parts the same type of broad-shouldered, calm-faced men as those who had made up their minds to sacrifice themselves for a cause. Selma Lagerlöf tells us about them in the first part of her book "Jerusalem". In their calm they resemble the pine giants in their forests; their smile is like their gaily-coloured farmhouses surrounded by the yellow cornfields and the blue-eyed flower of the flax, so often seen in these parts; but their passion is like the mighty waterfalls of their broad and clear rivers; these rivers look sometimes as blue and smooth as the eye of a child, but the

tumult of their cataracts is like the tempest. Selma Lagerlöf knows how to work into her picture of the life of these peasants the influence of Nature, and you feel how the storm mystifies them and leads on their imaginations, so that when Christ's messenger comes and, overtaken by the tempest, seeks shelter in the midst of a gathering of men and women, they fall to his feet and ask him to lead them to Jerusalem, where they will serve in the spirit of Christ, no matter what havoc may be wrought by a daughter leaving her father, a man taking his wife and letting his farm be sold to get gold for travelling expenses, the children kneeling before their schoolmaster in earnest prayer for his soul —his wicked soul, as they have been taught to think of it—while the kindly, God-fearing old man, bewildered at first, though resolute, takes his cane and chases the young apostles away!

If you have read all this, you approach the Lake of Siljan with a feeling of coming among people whom you know, and you step reverently on the paths at Rättvik, where Gustav Vasa, sure of himself and of his mission, but uncertain how to catch the attention of his listeners, spoke to them as they left church. It was something unusual for these peasants to hear a sermon on worldly matters, but a sermon it was that the young hero delivered with trembling voice. Many a night had he spent in the open, though it was in winter; he had been wounded and humiliated and even betrayed, though he had met with much kindness and understanding—still not yet had his words sunk deep enough. All the same, you need but know these stories to see the picture of the vigorous man, serious and disturbed, looking out over the ice-bound lake with deep concern. "Were they to feel the enemy's

A DALECARLIAN SCHOOL

heel dig into their own fields and rob them of their freedom—their freedom deep-rooted as the fir-trees in their forests ? " From that moment their imagination was caught, and though Gustavus did not know it, he had their hearts, though their tongues would not pronounce the redeeming words.

After refreshing thus our memories, we come into Dalecarlia, not as strangers, but as friends. And that is how I felt on coming to Rättvik. Here are many places to stay at, but Siljansborg seems by common consent to be the best. It is a charming hotel built on the slopes of the lake, with a terrace in front with lots of flowers, and at the back, where you enter, a small attempt at a garden. For the rest, woods and grassy slopes, and the eye is ever at rest upon blue water, blue sky, or shades of green in forest and meadow.

A friendly, elegant and clever-looking lady meets you at the door and shows you your room. The room is exquisitely clean. It has a gay yellow on the walls and an enchanting view over the lake. The whole place has an atmosphere, and there is harmony within as well as without. There are several big reception-rooms, each quite different in style from the other, and the colours of curtains, lampshades and flowers are chosen deliberately to give you that sense of rest.

The dining-room is rather a surprise to you, with its white walls and windows so high up, except on the side of the lake. Those tables by the windows looking out on the lake must be rather sought after, as the pleasure of gazing out upon it is intense.

As for the food, an American lady who came back for a second long stay says she gets here the best coffee in all Europe. All the meals are excellent, as we

can testify, and there is no lack of variety; there is, indeed, an abundance of small dishes to the taste of those who are repelled by a heavy meat diet. The dishes are perhaps more dainty than in most Swedish places, though the food is good everywhere in Sweden. You have good company here, too, and there is an excellent grand piano, and if you are fond of good music you can often steal into a quiet corner and listen to your heart's content to some clever amateur playing or singing. If the sunset is a beautiful one, you can go up to the balconies at the top of the house, where you have the view of Siljan in the fading light, and it dawns upon you that it is for eternity that Karlfeldt wrote his poem, "The Virgin Mary".

We had on our travels met an American who had told us of an old-world homestead which had remained in the same family for more than two hundred years, and we succeeded in discovering the way to it. There are no high walls on this countryside to spoil it. The roots from the fir-trees lie lumpy on your path, the road turns quickly, and on your right you have a lake in front of you. Soon you are in a wood where the sun is drawing out the fragrance from fir-trees and pines and the air is filled with ozone. A bee humming over a marigold flower, a swarm of insects dancing over a dark pond—how simple! how perfect! Your senses are filled with such sweet happiness that you are ready to envy people who can live away from the complications of city life and only breathe in the mild perfumes straight from Nature. But perhaps this is no longer possible in these days of motor-cars! The wireless in itself means complications, though it may and does bring happiness too. I heard of a teacher in the extreme north of Sweden who had lately got a wireless apparatus,

which made her lonely life a joy to her. One Sunday she had a visit from an old Laplander while there was a service going on in one of the Stockholm churches. She put the headphones on the old man's ears and watched his face as it dawned on him that he was listening to God's own word. There was awe, then wonder and radiance in the face of that old Laplander.

We reached the old homestead. It was very much like the old houses at the open-air museum of Skansen. The owners no longer actually lived in the old house, but it was kept as it used always to be, with its fire-place, its home-made clock, its built-in bedstead, any number of wooden utensils, its old glass and china and family treasures of lace and embroidery. Much longer than two hundred years had the home belonged to the same family, only their written records did not go farther back. "We have come all the way from London to see you," we greeted the woman of the house. "Have you, indeed?" she said with a smile. "Do you know anyone there?" I asked. "Ja, han, Palmstjerna," was her simple answer. And "he, Palmstjerna", who has a charming home in these parts, will know her too!

We asked the woman and her husband about their own family, and heard that they had sons and daughters. Their great grievance is against those of their forbears who sold the forest to the big companies. What was left was not enough to divide amongst their children to give them enough to live on, and the money, at the time so easily got, easily went. The question is what to live on when the land does not yield enough and the forests are gone. Farther up in the western parts of Dalecarlia, where there is no agriculture whatever, the inhabitants have lately taken to a new

home industry, that of making fur-coats out of sheepskins. The sheep are reared in the more fertile valleys of Norway, the skins dressed and made into handsome coats by these Swedish peasants, men famous all over Sweden for the cleverness with which they turn their hands to all sorts of useful work needed in a home. Only of late have they got a special use for this particular handicraft, the Swedish Army now ordering these fur-coats and private people also buying them for sports or motoring.

While motoring to Leksand from Rättvik we pass many of these farms, some new, some very old. They almost cry out to you to stop and come and sit down and know them. An Englishman with his pipe would feel well at home sitting in the porch while contemplating the affairs of this little world. Look at the timber in these various houses! Whether they are five hundred years old or comparatively modern, the logs have been chosen with the same care—heavy, massive logs—but the houses don't appear heavy. The proportions are good and the above-mentioned porch makes for lightness. Some of these porches are beautifully ornamented, others quite plain. Here you shake off rain and snow in bad weather; here you take shelter from the sun; and here again you chat away a spare moment, and in the twilight you get inspiration from a quiet rest in this blessed corner. And you Englishman would look at the well-built stables, at the barn and the too-delightful little provision shed, lofty on its pillars, and, meditating over your pipe, you would be sure to feel in harmony with the little children playing in the yard, the mother, having finished milking the cows, carrying her pails to the dairy, or the sinewy father, leading his horses quietly across to the stables at the end of the day's hard work.

AFTER CHURCH:
A WINTER SCENE IN LEKSAND DALECARLIA

On our way to Leksand we pass Fallberg, where Gustaf Ankarkrona lives in a charming house. He is one of Dalecarlia's artists, and has given his good judgment, his energy and his love, as well as his art, to foster and uphold the feeling for the old, to create and get order in the enterprises of to-day, to help and beautify wherever possible. Like Zorn, he has given of his rich personality for the common weal.

At Leksand it is a feast for the eye to watch the people in their national costumes walking or driving to church along the most wonderful of birch avenues in the world. If that is an exaggeration, it would be interesting to know where its counterpart is growing. The trunks are broad and strong, though tall and slender, and as white as innocence itself, and the crowns are majestic, still light-hearted, like young April. No wonder people come from afar to see the sight of churchgoers moving among these truly royal trees and in colours which are almost dazzling. The women from Leksand wear black skirts, but for the rest their costumes are made up of red and white and pretty, many-coloured bonnets and kerchiefs; the babies are in yellow frocks and sweet little bonnets. Nearly all the other Dalecarlian villages are in costumes represented here, all the colours under the sun and many queer and fascinating bonnets. Some of the men are also in costume, but they are mostly in dark colours except for a waistcoat or garters. The church is an old temple of renown, and to see it filled with its own congregation is a sight that is continually tempting travellers from other parts. They know how to listen to their preachers, these folk who for generations have been frequent churchgoers and serious, practical Christians. In the old days there were a great number of church boats landing near the old bridge across the

river at Leksand, each rowed by as many as ten or twelve pairs of oars. That must have been a grand sight! To-day there is not always even one, since the people living at Siljansnäs, from whence they used to come, have now got their own church.

I should like to tell more about villages and towns and famous men, of whom Dalecarlia has had its fair share. The traveller will indeed be well rewarded if he winds his own way in and out through dale and hill during a short summer month. Then, when he is at Mora, he will hear and see for himself what one man, who loved his country well, had time to do while he made himself famous in the outer world. That man was Zorn, and his old peasants from Mora have become familiar thousands of miles away from their humble dwellings and occupations, thanks to his genius. And as he has made men and women live through his art, so has he made old habits, old music, old occupations come into life again by his constant encouragement. Mora has much cause to be grateful to Anders Zorn.

And Linnæus was married in Dalecarlia to Sara Lisa Moræa, second cousin of Emanuel Swedenborg.

And one ought to speak of the great Dal River, mighty to behold, carrying on its strong back logs of timber as lightly as though they were matches when they toss down the waterfalls.

And the mines and industries—Grängesberg, Domnarvet, Avesta and the others—much might be said about these big matters, and, going farther back, about *Stora Kopparberget*, the copper-mine, which, it is interesting to note in these times of vested interests, was the first industrial company in the world and later an endless source of revenue to the Swedish Crown.

CHAPTER XVII

SELMA LAGERLÖF'S SAGA-LAND

I SUPPOSE that after our old friends Skagerrack and Kattegat the two Scandinavian names that were most ineradicably implanted in our childish minds were those of Lake Venner and Lake Vetter. Värmland is the province immediately above Venner, the more northern and much the larger of the two lakes. At the point where the Klara River, which has its source in Norway, flows into Lake Venner stands Värmland's capital, Karlstad, a town of broad streets and handsome avenues, celebrated politically because the negotiations for dissolving the union between Norway and Sweden took place here in 1905. Industrially, Karlstad is notable chiefly for its saw-mills and its mechanical works, which specialize in turbines, steam launches, railway material and machinery of all kinds for the wood-pulp and paper business. But it is not primarily through its political or industrial record that Karlstad stands out to-day in the memories of most Swedes. It is as the ante-chamber or threshold to the Saga-land of Selma Lagerlöf.[1]

During a two days' visit last September to that now

[1] But Selma Lagerlöf's is not the only great name associated with Värmland. Tegnér and Fröding, two of Sweden's most illustrious poets, also came from this province; so did Geijer, the historian, Troilé, the portrait-painter, and John Ericsson, the engineer.

world-famous region, my wife and I were exceptionally privileged persons, for we were the guests of the Swedish Traffic Association, and its director in Stockholm, Commander Peyron, had found for us the most solicitous of hosts and the most charming of guides in Dr. Linus Brodin, an author and lecturer well-known throughout Sweden as "Frykdalspojken"—"Frykdal's Boy"—under which pseudonym he has written countless essays and sketches interpreting the history and life of the whole of Värmland, and, above all, of the valley of the two Fryken lakes, which is the scene of the adventures of Gösta Berling, for Fryken is the real name of Selma Lagerlöf's "Löfven". Early in the morning after our arrival, we started, in Dr. Brodin's company, on as memorable a motor-ride as Sweden—or, indeed, all Europe—could offer.

But to be able fully to appreciate such a ride—perhaps to be able to bear patiently with a detailed description of it—one requires to be familiar, if not with Selma Lagerlöf's works generally, at least with her first and most famous effort; and not many English readers are in this position. "Gösta Berling's Saga", indeed, is a romance to which most people outside Scandinavia do not take easily. It is quintessentially Swedish. An American, who knows and loves Sweden well, Mr. Henry Goddard Leach, has described the book excellently.[1] It is "loosely put together", he says, "and sometimes as prolix as Arthurian romance, the very prototype of this long narrative of twelve vagrant Swedish cavaliers. But here personality combines with art to create a rhapsodic prose possessing the fervour of

[1] In a preface to the translation of "Gösta Berling's Saga", by Lillie Tudeer, vol. x of the Scandinavian Classics, published by the American-Scandinavian Foundation.

verse and a style new in world literature ". In a " Saga om en Saga "—" A Story about a Story "—Selma Lagerlöf tells how her book came into existence: how as a delicate child in the home of her forefathers, Mårbacka, beside the lower of the two chief Fryken lakes, she used to sit and muse over the old tales still current among the peasantry of the district—tales of the mad old days after the Napoleonic wars, when, as Mr. Leach puts it, " gay soldiers of fortune, by their pranks and romantic behaviour, made the bright-eyed maidens and pleasure-loving gentlemen of Värmland forget their poverty "; how for years she experimented silently with these tales, put them into verse, tried dramatic form, and how, at long last, a prize competition stimulated her into the final exertions which brought the romance to the light of day in its present form.

The first few hours of our ride took us past " Ekeby ", where the brilliant, reckless Gösta Berling and his devil-may-care companions had their strange habitation, and then down the eastern bank of the lower lake to Selma Lagerlöf's own home. She herself was away at Stockholm, but Dr. Brodin, who is a *persona grata* at Mårbacka, had obtained permission for me to see the house, and the friend and companion who helps its owner to look after it showed us most kindly and graciously through all the principal rooms. Here, once again, my wife must be the chronicler:

" A good many years ago I happened to meet an old lady who had been the teacher of Selma Lagerlöf when the latter was eight years old. She told me that one day, during a very violent storm, the little pupil was not to be found. Great anxiety prevailed, and every corner of the house was searched, until at last she was

discovered at an open window in the attic, her chin resting on her hand. I remember thinking that she must have looked like the bigger of the two angels in Raphael's 'Madonna,' lost in pensive adoration. Those musings of the child sank quietly into her soul, to be unearthed, so to speak, years later when she displayed her marvellous gift for story-telling and began to reveal the depths of the undemonstrative race of the Dalecarlians. I could not help remembering what my old friend told me when, not long ago, I witnessed the scene of the storm in the film taken from her book, 'Jerusalem'. What a difference between the mighty turbulence of that extraordinary scene and the calm, sweet, pensive angel-face!

"These thoughts kept recurring to my mind all the way from Karlstad to Mårbacka.

"After having passed the pillared entrance, very reminiscent of a 'stoep' in South Africa, we are in the hall, where two objects at once tell us that, however fond Selma Lagerlöf may be of the past, she knows how to make good use of the present—there is a wireless apparatus and a modern stone stove which heats the hall and the staircase. It is interesting to note to what an extent our materialistic world holds its grip on Selma Lagerlöf's mind, and the more you see of her home the more you feel that here is someone with a keen sense of beauty and understanding of the past and its traditions, but no slave to it. In rebuilding Mårbacka, she has had the help of an architect from Stockholm, who has seen eye to eye with her in these matters. The details are exquisitely thought out but don't force themselves upon you, and the *ensemble* is perfect. The harmony of colours in the hand-painted decorations on the walls, all round the doors and windows, along the

ceiling and in the corners, gives a beautiful effect; some of the doors are of fine wood, others are painted, but there is no repetition: you have a different scheme of decoration in every room. The dining-room, for instance, has let into its walls a series of large drawings depicting scenes from the homes of Selma Lagerlöf's brothers and sisters.

"We are told by Dr. Brodin that Selma Lagerlöf sometimes gives very merry coffee-parties in her blue and white dining-room and that she is a perfect hostess, telling stories with great humour, making everybody feel at home, and rejoicing, above all, when she can induce some talented young musician to play or sing.

"But not very often does the Lady of Mårbacka allow herself time for these gaities. When her 'inner self' begins to assert itself, she withdraws to her sanctuary upstairs. We are fortunate, indeed, in being allowed to visit this most secluded part of the house. On our way, in an upper hall, we see another unusual decoration. Over the doorway are drawings of the three Mårbackas: the present one, its merged predecessor, and the first one of all—a mere cottage.

"We pass through another sitting-room, or 'morning-room', and enter the library, which is long and narrow, with neatly-arranged shelves all round it, and in the middle the table at which the great writer sits with her back to the window when she is at work. What perfect order and method on her table and in the whole room! I feel quite envious over the amount of empty space on these shelves—no cramming anywhere. There is a small supplementary library, in which also perfect order reigns and in which the library step-ladder is placed.

"Near the bedroom door is a map of Sweden in

beautiful workmanship, and above it a golden goose with tiny Nils Holgersson on its back, the whole cunningly illuminated by electric light. And now we may open the bedroom door. We feel it is hardly right to enter here. But what a charming room! I don't think anybody else in the world has such a room to sleep in. No two bits of furniture seem to have been bought together. It is as though each piece had its own story and *had* to be in that particular place, whence it could never be removed. By the window is a fascinating oblong table, at which we are told Selma Lagerlöf also writes sometimes. I doubt whether the surroundings count for anything to her while she is working—she has taken it all in and draws from an endless well of impressions; but she has only to lift her eyes to have in full view the inspiring landscape which she made immortal in her first book. Thus thinking, you feel indeed you are in a sanctuary, as though you had been allowed to lift a tiny corner of the veil that hides a soul from the cold world.

"I can't help wondering to what an extent Selma Lagerlöf would be understood in the English-speaking world if her books were read in the consciousness of how intensely she has loved her characters, even their sins and the very ground on which they stepped. I once heard an English critic declare her to be one of the two greatest of living writers, and I understood better his enthusiasm when I heard that he had been in Selma Lagerlöf's country when he read her books."

After a long day filled with impressions we arrived late that evening at the Tourists' Hotel at Lekvattnet, an isolated place charmingly situated by a large lake. The holiday season had just ended, as we were aware,

MÅRBACKA, SELMA LAGERLÖF'S HOME

and the hotel was nominally "closed", but Dr. Brodin had arranged that we should find comfortable harbourage in it for the night. The weather remained perfect, and it was very pleasant to stroll up and down the lonely road between the rows of tall fir-trees, stopping now and again to gaze upon the moon-lit surface of the deep, still waters beneath. Beyond the lake rise endless forests, mounting higher and higher until they reach the fjells of Norway. In among these forests are the homes of Finns whose families have lived here for centuries past. They are a fine race, Dr. Brodin says, very conservative of the habits and customs of Finland, and still speaking the language of their distant ancestors, although exiled so long.

Next morning, in brilliant sunshine, we set forth on our return journey to Karlstad, making first for the pleasant little town of Arvika. Arvika is noted for a number of industries, but, above all, as a place frequented by artists. All the arts and crafts of Sweden are to be found in practice here.

A little outside the town Dr. Brodin had his summer home. Here we were to spend a delightful hour or two. Living with him were two younger brothers, one of them a pianist, the other a singer; the pianist is married, and his charming young wife sings also. While we were being entertained to coffee and cakes, we listened to really exquisite music. Afterwards Dr. Brodin showed us some of his most treasured possessions in the way of curious old manuscripts and prints and books.

There is an art in the studying and cherishing of the past and present of one's own country, and of this art Dr. Brodin has proved himself a master. His mind is saturated with knowledge of Värmland's history and

folk-lore and old handicrafts, and he is hail-fellow-well-met alike with the squires in their spacious and often beautiful mansions and with the Finnish foresters in their bleak dwellings. Wherever he took us during our two days' pilgrimage with him, he was the recipient of cordial and affectionate greetings from high and low. When not actually in Värmland, moving about from town to town, from village to village, often lecturing in churches and schoolrooms, he is studying ancient archives in the libraries of Stockholm and Gothenburg. In these big cities, also, he is in request as a lecturer on the themes he has made his own. There cannot, I think, be many men in Sweden leading lives at once so happy and so beneficent as that of Dr. Linus Brodin.

CHAPTER XVIII

JÖNKÖPING

JÖNKÖPING is the Swedish town which I know best. Apart from its world-famous safety matches —*säkerhetständstickor*, an impossible polysyllable, but perhaps the bit of Swedish best known outside Sweden —it is a relatively obscure place. It boasts, however, one other industry of real importance, a paper-factory; it has a population of nearly 30,000; it is the capital of Småland; and its history goes back many centuries. It is a town, therefore, of some note in its peaceful and unpretentious way. It is very pleasantly situated at the extreme south of Lake Vetter, and it lies just about eighty English miles due east of Gothenburg. Had its municipal authorities been wide-awake, Jönköping might conceivably have been a station on the main line from Stockholm to Malmö when the railway was being constructed, and it might thus have become a popular tourists' resort; when travelling by that route one must change trains at Nässjö—a junction some forty miles to the south-east—in order to get there, so it remains unvisited by most foreigners.

Peacefulness and unpretentiousness are the peculiar charms of Jönköping. There is nothing very much for the visitor to do in the town itself. Its outstanding attraction is the really beautiful panoramic view from the heights of the *Stadspark* of an afternoon. When

tired of that, you can go for a promenade on the harbour pier (it will remind you a little of Kingstown, if you are a frequenter of the Green Isle), or along this southern shore of the immense Vetter, or beside the quite small lakes called Munksjö and Rocksjö, which may almost be reckoned parts of the town and which add not a little to its fascination. Of an evening there is, during some months of the year, a well-managed theatre to go to, and at all times you have your choice of several cinemas. These resources exhausted, you can do as do the youth of Jönköping and walk up one side of the main street, *Stor Gatan*, and down the other, or sit and listen to music in the restaurant of one of the two big hotels. I am sure that there are young women in Jönköping who find these diversions more truly to their taste than anything that has come their way during their brief holidays in London, just as that Scottish lassie was able to declare from her heart: "Paris is a' vara weel, but gie me Peebles for pleesure!" [1]

Stor Gatan is in two sections, west and east, with, between them, a canal bridge. *Östra Stor Gatan* runs in its easterly direction, almost parallel with an esplanade along Lake Vetter, until it wanders out into the country on the way towards the hillside townlet of Husqvarna, notable for its industries and for a very beautiful waterfall. South of *Östra Stor Gatan*, and running in the same direction but not so far, is *Smedje Gatan*—"Smith Street". If, one day in June, July, or August of last year, you had chanced to stroll down *Smedje Gatan* and

[1] A Jönköping friend of mine objects to this sentence as unfair to her young fellow-townswomen, many of whom have sought their livelihoods abroad in the most enterprizing and adventurous way. But I am thinking only of exceptions, not of the majority. No doubt that young person of Peebles was an exception too!

JÖNKÖPING: FROM THE STADSPARK

SCENE ON THE ISLAND, VISINGSÖ

at a certain point, between a grocer's shop and a dairy, to turn down a narrow passage to your right, you would have found yourself in a large, oblong, cobble-stoned courtyard, and you would probably have been asked by my small son, either in English or in Swedish, boldly, but, I hope, not impolitely, what you wanted.

All the houses along the south side of *Smedje Gatan* are two-story wooden structures built in the same style—about fifty in all. They extend back an immense distance from the street towards the shore of the lake of Munksjö. In some cases the house itself extends actually to the lake-side; in others the oblong courtyard in the centre of each is closed in about half-way, and on the farther side of it are outhouses, sheds, etc. The particular house in whose courtyard that small son of mine would have greeted you is quite a little city by itself.[1] After passing the grocer's, as you come through the passage, the first door on your right is a tailor's, next to him there is a cobbler, farther on a maker of wickerwork chairs. For the most part, artisans are on the ground floor, while the first-floor apartments—one or two of them very nicely furnished—belong to people of better means but almost as diversified in their callings. The little community includes about a dozen families altogether, humble folks mostly and paying quite modest rents. The house is the property of my wife's mother, who lives in it herself and who in her grandson's eyes is its all-powerful despot—hence his own semi-proprietorial attitude. For the present, by the way, and very likely for another year or two, he goes in the home circle by the name of "Ponken".[2]

[1] By the way, was not the term *cité* applied to somewhat similar dwellings, or combinations of dwellings, in mediæval Paris?

[2] A playful version of *Pojken*, "the boy".

I wish continually that I had a touch of the genius of the late Carl Ewald, the Danish novelist, so that I could make out of Ponken and his experiences and emotions such another book as "My Little Boy"![1] Ponken's experiences and emotions last summer in that large oblong courtyard were endlessly amusing and exciting, above all on market days, when a variety of country vehicles would make their way into it and all sorts of strange things would happen. Early in September, however, having completed his seventh year, and there being no question of his return to London until after Christmas, he was promoted to the grade of schoolboy, and the courtyard came to be only an afternoon resort. Ponken and his school should have an entire chapter were I capable of doing the subject justice. It would be the best thing in this book. The school is a girls' school, really, but diminutive males are welcomed into its lower classes, and in Ponken's class, the lowest of all, the sexes last winter were numerically about equal. The kind and clever lady who taught it had taught two of Ponken's aunts[2] there more than thirty years before. I was present at her opening address on the first morning of the term; it was very brief and sensible and to the point. Some of her later discourses we got through Ponken. One of them embodied the story of Adam and Eve. When he came home, he repeated it at once to Lisa, the maid. We wanted him to tell it to us again afterwards, but he wouldn't.

[1] Admirably translated by the late A. Teixeira de Mattos.

[2] His mother's sisters. The Swedes have a very convenient way of distinguishing between parents, uncles and aunts on the father's side and on the mother's side—e.g. a mother's sister is *moster*, a father's sister is *faster*; and so with *morbror*, mother's brother; *farbror*, father's brother; *mormor*, mother's mother; and *farmor*, father's mother.

"Oh, no," he said; "*you* must have heard the story before!"

Out of Jönköping's 30,000 inhabitants, I suppose I must have met about thirty or forty in the ideally happy home of Ponken's beloved *mormor*. Among them were a dignitary from the local Law Courts—a man of great benevolence and exquisite courtesy—and his wife, cultured, clever, an excellent linguist, interested in everything; a very admirable doctor and his wife and sister, all three of whom we liked greatly; a tall, handsome, athletic-looking artillery captain and his family; a number of leading members of the Jönköping branch of the Theosophical Society, several of them subscribers to "The Star of the East" and particularly well up in the doings and saying of Mrs. Besant; a Lutheran minister, not at all disposed to frown upon Theosophists; some very bright and agreeable young school-teachers; a prosperous paper-merchant and his wife and pretty daughter, the latter just back from London and talking English quite excellently. I need not continue the list. As it stands, it will suffice to give a notion of the range and nature of our little *Smedje Gatan* circle.

Jönköping's one title to world-wide renown lies, as already mentioned, in its match industry; and its one citizen of outstanding eminence is the man who, in 1845, set that industry on foot, Johan Edvard Lundström. It was he also, when tired of the success of the matches—he had a way of tiring of enterprises which grew monotonously successful—became the founder of the great Munksjö paper business. The benefits that he conferred upon the town are beyond computation. A portrait-bust of him is to be seen, conspicuously

placed, in a pleasant alley overlooking the scene of his earlier labours, but his real memorial is in the town's increased prosperity and importance. The epitaph devised by Dr. Johnson for Wren in St. Paul's Cathedral would serve not less aptly for Lundström in Jönköping —*Si monumentum requiris circumspice!*

There was a time when strangers found admission into the works of the match-factory, but one or two observant Japanese visitors are said to have learned too much, and now the secrets of the place are rigorously guarded. If you are furnished with an introduction you may perhaps penetrate for a few moments into the Board-room, which is hung with portraits of the directors of former days, Johan Edvard Lundström and his brother Carl Franz among them, but that will be as much as you will be allowed to see.

Carl Franz Lundström was his brother's complement. He possessed the organizing gifts and the methodical habits which Johan Edvard lacked. They co-operated most harmoniously in the controlling of the business until 1857, when it was made into a company under the title of *Jönköpings Tändsticksfabriks Aktiebolag*. In 1863, after Johan Edvard Lundström had finally relinquished all share in the management, the chief directorship was placed in the hands of another Jönköping worthy, with an English name, Mr. Bernard Hay. A number of innovations and improvements were introduced in the course of the next four decades, and it was an immensely more important enterprise which in 1903 became amalgamated with more than half a dozen other Swedish match-factories under the complicated name *La Société Jönköping et Vulcans Tändsticksfabriks Aktiebolag*. Yet other match industries were merged into it later, and the business, as finally constituted in December

1917, became known as *Svenska Tändsticks Aktiebolaget*, —" The Swedish Match Co." With a working capital of 45,000,000 kronor and a reserve capital of 63,000,000 kronor, it is now one of the largest industrial enterprises of Scandinavia, and quite the largest match industry in the world.

This is not an encyclopædia, so I shall not discourse upon Jönköping's other and lesser industries. I must resist even the temptation to talk about the Munksjö paper-factory, although I have been shown over the whole of it by its very courteous manager and was immensely interested by all I saw and heard on that occasion. It is curious to note that Horace Marryat, author of " A Year in Sweden ", who visited Jönköping in 1862, thought it might grow into " a little Swedish Manchester ". He was struck by several of the things he found being manufactured there, above all by the " damask table-linen of exquisite design and quality ". That beautiful damask is made no more, and although Jönköping has won distinction by its cloth and its shoes, in addition to its paper and its matches, it is not thought of now as a manufacturing town.

To form any kind of mental impression of Jönköping you need to look at a large-scale map of Sweden and to observe the relation of the town to Lake Vetter. " Before my hotel window," writes Marryat (he was staying at the big hotel, *Stadshotellet*, near the railway station), " the smooth lake spreads its silvery mirror, in hue like a Quaker's silk dress." Apparently his visit was a very brief one. Had it been longer, he would have found that Vetter is a lake of moods and with a different dress for every mood; he would have witnessed colour-schemes never to be forgotten.

It is a very large lake, seventy miles long, thirteen miles in average breadth, in some places three hundred and seventy feet deep. It is fed mainly by springs from beneath, and its waters are wonderfully clear. Its shores, with few bays in them, are steep and picturesque. A little more than twenty miles north of Jönköping, visible as a black bar on the horizon, is Lake Vetter's one island of any importance, Visingsö, with to the right of it, but screened from our view, the prettiest, and one of the most famous, of its towns, Grenna. With a sketch of the town and of the island (K.L.W. *pinxit*) I shall end this chapter and my book :

" Whitsuntide is the time of the year when Sweden is at its most fascinating, after the long winter and an often belated spring. Her people flock out of the towns to watch with enchanted eyes Nature's wondrous transformation scenes and to listen with uplifted hearts to the jubilant concerts in bush and tree.

" This is the right time for a visit to Visingsö. The boat from Jönköping leaves at nine o'clock and lands you in about an hour and a half at the old quay near the ruin of Visingsborg. Here spring's early green adorns the trees that form a ' guard of honour ' round the old castle, sending tender shoots up against the grey, weather-beaten walls.

" One of the quaint old vehicles peculiar to Visingsö is offered to us, and we look at it with curiosity. It is a big flat cart covered with mattresses, and you sit on the sides, letting your legs dangle down. In wet weather you have sore need of your umbrella, while on fine days you may be glad of a sunshade ; but it is a comfortable enough means of conveyance. However, this time we prefer to walk.

" We pass underneath the remains of the old fortifi-

cations and emerge in a big green yard, and have in front of us the copper tower of the Brahe Church, between a meadow in its early light spring dress and an oak plantation sprouting in brownish-greenish tints. The church must be visited and its treasures admired, but on a day like this Nature has the first demand upon us, and we take to the road again, walking past little farms and cottages, where all is peace and quietude, fruit trees in blossom bending over the roofs or adorning the four corners of the small gardens. Visingsö is famous for its cherries, its cleanliness and its law-abiding inhabitants, among whom poverty in its darkest aspects is unknown. The old and unfortunate are helped by neighbours, friends and relatives so as to avoid *public* assistance. This has been the kind and tactful spirit of the island, and has left its mark of dignified self-respect and peace on the faces of its people, who no doubt have their own troubles and sorrows, but who do not allow us to perceive them. Quite certain is it that Visingsö's summer visitors feel a great longing to go back again, and will return year after year to the same small farm and the same kind landlady. The air is mild and filled with the balm of the forests which, as we go along, are giving us shelter from the sun. Magnificent big trees, fairly far apart, and a beautiful grassy undergrowth invite us for a leisurely rest, but we should like to mount the belfry of the Church of Kumlaby, which is not far off by now. The church is from the twelfth century and one of the oldest in Sweden. On the other side you have a fine view over land and water far across the lake, and below you see villages and lonely dwellings looking like toy farms and animals, outhouses and meadows alike taken out of a playbox and put in the right order by some

regulating hand. In this old-world corner we can rest and have lunch and actually sit down among the blossoms and breathe in the spring-perfumed air and listen to the birds warbling.

"From this point we finally take one of the above-mentioned flat carriages and continue our travels in an exultant mood, with the south end of the island as our goal. At both ends of Visingsö kings had their palaces in the Middle Ages, and several kings have died there. The lake has so far encroached upon the land and eaten away the soil that now only on the south side a bit of a ruin of a royal castle is visible. Then there is the big ruin of the landing-place of a much later time belonging to a mighty lord, Per Brahe, himself more like a king even in acts and deeds than his predecessors on the island.

"Instead of staying the night at the town of Visingsö, it is more tempting to go across to the mainland to the small town of Grenna, where Baron Düben's famous little hotel offers us a very agreeable resting-place. Grenna is flanked by a ruin on one side and an old castle on the other, clearly visible against the evening sky, though the tiny town itself presents only an aspect of idyllic peace and utter contentment to be held in Mother Earth's bountiful lap—the mighty lady has her big broad back towards the east so as to shelter her little ward from the cold east wind."

INDEX

Abisko, 152
Ankarkrona, Herr Gustaf, 185
Arild, 18–20
Arvika, 193

Bain, F. W., 128, 129–30, 139
Bain, R. Nisbet, 97–8
Barclay, Mrs. Florence, 106–7
Barnens Ö., 69
Båstad, v, 17–18
Bellessort, M. André, x
Bellman, 84–6
Birger Jarl, 65, 175
Bismarck, 95
Bjorckman, E., 88–9
Brahe, Ebba, 94 *note*, 177
Brandes, Dr. Georg, 24–6
Brodin, Dr. Linus, 188-94
Brunius, August, 111
Brunius, Professor C. G., 48

Cambridge Modern History, The, 91–4
Chalmers, William, 9
Chamberlain, Mr. Joseph, 8
Chanut, Pierre, 130–3
Charles XII, 12, 95–105
Christina, Queen, of Sweden, 65, 113, 128–50
Clason, Herr I. G., 71
Cromwell, 116–18, 128–9, 142

Dalecarlia, ix, 89, 178–86
Dickson, Oscar, 9–10

Edinburgh, 66
Engström, Albert, 79
Ericsson, John, 187

Falsterbo, v, 22–6
Florence, 62, 67
Fröding, Gustaf, 112, 187

Gällivare, 151, 154
Galsworthy, Mr. John, 107, 109, 112
Geffroy, M., 103
Giotto, 63
"Gösta Berling's Saga," 49, 188–9
Göteborgs Handels - Tidningen, 83–4
Gotha Canal, 172–7
Gothenburg (*Göteborg*), 1–11
Grenna, 204
Grimberg, Dr. Carl, 94
Gustavus Adolphus, 2, 87, 93–8, 113, 140, 177
Gustav Vasa, 87–91, 178–81

Halland, 17
Halmstad, 17
Hälsingborg, 20, 21
Hamerton, Philip Gilbert, 26
Harsprånget, 155
Hedberg, Herr Tor, 80–1
Helsingegården, 158–61
Hellberg, Herr Otto, 10
Höganäs, 54
Hope, Anthony, 109

Jerfsö, 158
Johnson, Dr., 104–5
Johnson Line, 6, 70
Jönköping, 195–204

Karlfeldt, 112, 182
Karlskrona, 54
Karlstad, 187
Kebnekeise, 52
Key, Ellen, 78
Kiruna, 151–7
Kullaberg, 54

Lagerlöf, Selma, 49–61, 106, 179, 187–94
Larsson, Carl, 162–71
Laurin, Mr. Carl G., 30–4, 79–80
Leach, Henry Goddard, 188
Leksand, 184–6
Lind-af-Hageby, Miss, 88–91
London, Jack, 106–8
Lundström, Carl Franz, 200
Lundström, Johan Edvard, 199–200
Lysekil, v, vi, 13–16

Mälar, Lake, vi
Malmö, ix, x, 20, 22
Manchester Guardian, 83
Marryat, Horace, 5, 201
Marstrand, v, vi, 10
Miehe, the Brothers, 85
Milles, Carl, 87
Mölle, 54
Morley of Blackburn, Lord, 142
"Mormor," 198–9

Newnham-Davis, Colonel, 76–7, 84
"Nils Holgersson," 49–61
Nordenfelt, Kammarherr Thorsten, 18–20
Nordenskjöld, 10
Norrköping, 57
Norrman, Herman, 79

Örebro, 125
Östberg, Herr, 70–1
Östergötland, 174–5
Oxenstierna, Axel, 113, 143

Palmstjerna, Baron, 183
Peyron, Commander, 188
"Ponken," 197–9
Porjus, 151–7

Ranke, 128 *note*, 139 *note*
Rättvik, 181–5
Reddaway, W. F., 91
Rydberg, Viktor, 112

Saltsjöbaden, vi
Seaton, Colonel, 95
Siljansborg, 181–2
Skåne, 53, 57–60
Skånegården, 17–18
Skara, 124
Småland, 57–60, 79–80

St. Bridget, 176
St. Peter, 57–60
Stockholm, vi–viii, 62–86, 173
Stockholms Dagbladet, 83–4
Strindberg, i, 87–91
Strömstad, v, 12–13
Sundberg, Fröken Agnes, 158
Swedenborg, 12, 186
Swedish - British Society, The, 86
Swedish Lloyd Line, ix

Tegnér, 187
Traz, M. Robert de, 60–1

Upsala, vii, 1, 113, 124, 126, 128–150

Valdemar III of Denmark, 40–2
Värmland, 187–94
Visby, vii, 39–48, 54–6
Visingsö, 202–4
Voltaire, 97–104

Waal, Herr Anders de, 86
Wells, H. G., 107, 112
Westman, Herr, 70–1
Whitelocke, Bulstrode, 113–50
Wilde, Oscar, 85
William II, the ex-Kaiser, 38

Zaharoff, Sir Basil, 19–20
Zimmern, Miss Helen, 40
Zorn, Anders, 34, 185

NOTE

Four of the chapters in this volume have appeared, in whole or in part, in various papers and periodicals: "Swedes and English" in the "Contemporary Review", and translated into Swedish in "Svenska Dagbladet"; "Porjus and Kiruna" in the "Pioneer" of Allahabad; portions of "A Walk round Stockholm" in "Countries of the World"; portions of "Gothenburg" in a "Swedish Supplement" issued by "The Times" in May, 1923. In two or three other chapters I have used some pages or paragraphs previously printed elsewhere, but more than three-quarters of the volume is new. To the editors of the various publications mentioned I make my cordial acknowledgments.

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